All issues available have
been filmed.
Unfortunately, any
scattered missing issues
are no longer available.

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cpsc memo

JANUARY 1980

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

An exhibit on wood burning safety was sponsored by the Twin Cities Area Office at the Minnesota State Fair. More than 1 million persons attended the Fair. The exhibit included examples of properly and improperly installed wood burning stoves and a slide series. More than 5,000 written requests for safety brochures were received following the showing of the display.

COMMISSION URGES PUBLIC TO 'SAVE ENERGY SAFELY'

Since cheap fuel is no longer available, consumers are being hit by a barrage of suggestions and advertisements about energy-saving products. CPSC has its own message to consumers who are buying energy conserving devices such as space heaters, coal and wood burning stoves, thermal insulation, bicycles, and gasoline containers. That message is: *SAVE ENERGY SAFELY.*

The Commission supports energy conservation efforts while it emphasizes that consumers should be aware of the hazards that may accompany the use of some energy-related products.

continued next page

FY '79 MAY BE CPSC'S 'MOST PRODUCTIVE' YEAR

Fiscal year 1979 may prove to be the Consumer Product Safety Commission's most productive year.

Product investigations and recalls under Section 15 of the Consumer Product Safety Act affected 53.4 million products involving 198 separate actions for the 1979 fiscal year. Since 1974, approximately 117 million products have been affected by recall efforts under Section 15.

Other major CPSC accomplishments in 1979 included:

- **10 new Commission safety rules became effective;**
- **7 safety rules were adopted to become effective in 1980;**
- **11 rules were proposed for promulgation;**
- **Participation in development of four voluntary safety rules;**
- **Monitored development of 40 voluntary safety rules;**
- **Field personnel investigated 3200 product-related injuries;**
- **CPSC television films were seen by 3,751,000 viewers in 673 showings;**
- **Redesigned the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System to include 74 hospital emergency rooms;**
- **More than 500,000 consumer calls were received on CPSC Hotline;**
- **5 million copies of pamphlets and brochures were distributed to consumers;**
- **CPSC public service announcements potentially reached the total U.S. population eight times over (based on Broadcast Advertiser Reports measurements).**

Section 15 of the Consumer Product Safety Act (CPSA) requires firms to report products that fail to comply with safety rules or that contain defects that could create substantial hazards.

The largest single manufacture recall occurred when an

continued next page

REGIONAL HEARINGS SET ON FORMALDEHYDE IN HOME INSULATION

As part of its ongoing investigation into the safety and health effects of formaldehyde in consumer products, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is conducting regional hearings focusing on urea formaldehyde (UF) foam insulation. The first hearing was held in Portland, Ore. on December 13, 1979.

The Commission has received more than 500 consumer complaints about adverse health effects that may be caused by formaldehyde gas being released from UF foam insulation. CPSC staff is informed that UF foam insulation has been installed in more than 500,000 homes nationwide since 1976. The product is mixed by professional installers at the homesite and pumped into spaces between the walls in a shaving-cream-like form which then hardens into a "wall" of insulation.

The three regional hearings scheduled this year to help the Commission in deciding on regulatory alternatives for UF foam insulation, will be held on January 10 in Atlanta, Ga.; February 5 in Minneapolis, Minn.; and February 26 in Hartford, Conn.

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'MOST PRODUCTIVE' YEAR from page 1

estimated 18.5 million electric and nonelectric coffee percolators were recalled because of instances where the coffee pot slipped out of the handle attachments.

A major recall occurred when approximately 22 million hair dryers distributed by 39 firms were involved in corrective actions because they contained asbestos paper which was exposed to the heated air stream.

An estimated 2 million toys containing a missile which could be fired and aspirated by children were recalled. More than a million infant exercisers which attach above doors also were recalled when it was discovered that the devices were not suitable for certain door mouldings.

Other corrective actions under Section 15b of CPSA involved 40,000 snowmobiles, 97,000 spear guns, 6,000 wood-burning stoves and many other products.

The Commission received 26 petitions during fiscal year 1979. Sixteen of these were addressed as were 27 which were carried over from the previous year.

Enforcement activities with existing rules also were extensive. During the fiscal year, area offices began monitoring over 300 recalls of products which violated regulations under the Consumer Product Safety Act (81% of the recalls), Federal Hazardous Substances Act (14%), Flammable Fabrics Act (2%), and Poison Prevention Packaging Act (3%).

Recalls of architectural glazing materials and refuse bins accounted for more than two-thirds of the total. Some of the other noncomplying products recalled included paint with excess lead, children's toys and other products, household chemicals, cellulose insulation and bicycles, and drugs and dietary supplements without child-resistant packaging.

In enforcement actions and judicial proceedings, the Commission brought 17 injunctions, 18 seizures, and 8 civil penalty actions. It initiated 3 administrative actions for cease and desist orders, and accepted 4 consent agreements.

'SAVE ENERGY SAFELY' from page 1

Gas, oil, and kerosene space heaters, for instance, can start a fire in the home if they are placed too close to drapes, furniture, or other flammable materials, or near where people frequently walk. Unvented space heaters are particularly hazardous because of the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. CPSC has decided to propose a safety standard to require the use of an oxygen-depletion shut off device on unvented gas space heaters. The sensor would detect reduced levels of oxygen in the living area and shut off the heater before hazardous levels of carbon monoxide accumulate. When using an unvented space heater keep a window or door in the room slightly open to provide fresh air.

Adequate ventilation is also important when using coal and wood burning heating stoves. Flues should be kept unobstructed. These stoves should *only* be installed by a qualified person who follows all state or local safety requirements for their installation. Stoves and exhaust flues can become extremely hot and start fires on nearby walls, floors, and furnishings. Therefore, it is important to have an adequate clearance from combustibles on all sides of the stove, as specifically stated in instructions with stoves listed with a nationally recognized laboratory. Fireproofing materials, such as a fireproof stoveboard or a brick platform, must be placed underneath stoves and—in some cases—on nearby walls.

Consumers are also buying a variety of energy conservation devices to add to flame-fired appliances which reduce the use of fuel while maintaining an acceptable level of performance. These include vent dampers, flue gas heat extractors, and other devices. The Commission is studying such devices for possible hazards such as carbon monoxide poisoning, explosions, contact burns, fire, and electrical shock.

The Commission has set mandatory standards for cellulose home insulation designed to protect the public from fire and corrosion hazards. It is awaiting research results before it decides whether to regulate urea formaldehyde foam insulation.This type of insulation may release formaldehyde gas into living areas, causing upper and lower respiratory problems, headaches, allergic reactions, and other health problems.

The proper installation of all types of insulation can be as important to consumers' safety as the product itself. For example, insulation should be kept at least 3 inches away from the sides of recessed light fixtures in the attic. Insulation should also be kept away from exhaust flues of furnaces, water heaters, space heaters or other heat-producing devices. Placing insulation near such fixtures could entrap heat, and a fire could result.

The Commission urges great care when using gasoline. Remember there is *NO* safe way to store gasoline in the home or the trunk of a car. A rear end collision could ignite gasoline stored in a car trunk, and any flame, spark, or pilot light could ignite the vapors of gasoline kept in the house. If, however, gasoline must be kept handy—never keep it in glass bottles, plastic jugs or other unsuitable containers. The consumer may want to consider a container with certain safety features such as a pressure release valve or a flame arrester. Never store gasoline in a car trunk or in a house or attached garage. Rather, keep gasoline outside the house in a well-ventilated place.

For consumers who are bicycling more and driving less, the Commission emphasizes that they should follow all traffic laws and signals, just as cars must, to protect themselves from accidental injury.

CPSC, and the Department of Energy, suggest that consumers lower the thermostat setting on water heaters. A lower temperature setting not only saves energy and lowers costs, it also prevents serious tap water scald injuries. Most water heaters in use are set at 140° F. and higher, which is hot enough to cause serious scalding burns - especially to children under the age of 5 and persons over the age of 65 who cannot escape quickly enough. Some experts believe that a thermostat setting on home water heaters of between 120-125° F. or lower may be necessary to prevent most serious injuries. Consumers should set back their water heaters to the lowest temperature which will still serve household hot water needs.

CPSC has more information on most of these energy-related products for the consumer who writes or calls the Commission.

COURT TO DECIDE CASE ON SECRECY OF CPSC REPORTS

Reprinted from *The Washington Star*, December 4, 1979.

The Supreme Court yesterday agreed to spell out the government's authority to make public the reports that private industry files on consumer products.

The case involves the Consumer Product Safety Commission, set up in 1972 to gather information on safety hazards with consumer goods.

The new case is the second one the court has agreed to hear on the commission's review of accidents involving television sets. The agency began that review after a series of fires and electric shocks that happened to TV sets.

The commission has been willing to release industry reports on those accidents to two consumer groups which want to see them. That however, has been blocked by a lower federal court. The Supreme Court is expected to rule next year on which federal court is to handle the dispute over release of the industry reports.

The new case that the justices said they would review involves a separate lower court ruling which, if it stands, could give the industry even more protection against public release of its accident reports.

Under the law creating the commission, it is supposed to determine whether the reports filed with it are accurate before it can make them public.

The agency is also obliged to decide, in advance, whether public release of the reports would be fair to the industry.

The commission has argued that it must take those steps only when it decides on its own to make industry reports public and not when someone in the public comes to the commission and demands access to the reports.

The 3rd U.S. Court of Appeals ruled last April that the commission must always go through the steps spelled out by the law before it discloses any industry report.

If that ruling is upheld by the Supreme Court, the commission has argued, it would "impose a substantial, if not impossible, burden on the agency to verify the accuracy of the information" supplied to it by businesses.

If the agency were to try to verify the accuracy of the TV accident reports, for example, it would have to go through nine file cabinets of documents, the agency said.

Kenneth R. Rashid (shown at right) is congratulated after being named Associate Executive Director for Communications by CPSC Executive Director Richard A. Gross (left). Rashid had been acting director of communications since early in 1978.

REPORT SHOWS THAT A HOUSE FIRE OCCURS EVERY MINUTE

Here's a good resolution for the new year! Why not review your safety habits and practices around the home so you don't run the risk of an accidental house fire this year?

Why not conduct a safety inspection of your home?

According to 1978 statistics compiled by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) one American home is involved in an accidental fire every minute of the day. Over a 24-hour period, approximately 14 people will die in some 1,700-plus fires in one and two-family homes across the nation.

House fires are only one part of the overall fire picture. For calendar 1978, fire departments reported there were some 3 million fires, and property damage was estimated at $4.4 billion. There were 8,621 deaths associated with fires and 32,023 injuries. And 162 firemen were killed fighting fires while another 106,000 were injured on the job.

The greatest property loss, the most injuries and the greatest number of deaths are associated with accidental house fires. For this reason, CPSC believes that continuing reviews of your fire safety practices at home are your best defense against a fire.

For example, cigarettes account for 32 per cent of all deaths in fires of one and two-family homes. NFPA lists cigarettes as the cause in five of 18 major sources of fires in homes. In most fires, the association says cigarettes ignite upholstered furniture in living areas and bedding in sleeping quarters.

Other major sources of home fires include electrical wiring components, matches, lighters, candles, and cooking and heating equipment.

CPSC estimates that electric and gas kitchen ranges are involved with some 20,000 consumer injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms, about two-thirds of which are for fire and burn injuries.

Flammable liquids, primarily gasoline, are responsible for about 10,000 annual burn injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms. Some are caused by improper storage of these liquids, resulting in fires when the volatile gases are ignited by a source many feet away from the stored flammable liquid. Some 500 burn injuries were reported when kerosene ignited, and another 1,300 persons, mostly children, were treated after swallowing some kerosene.

In its technical analysis of residential fires, NFPA says that consumers should make every effort to break the ignition chain leading to the fire. Because they cause the greatest percentage of home fires and deaths, cigarettes continue to be the target of most fire prevention programs. Consumers should recognize that they are risking fire when smoking around household articles that can ignite. Aside from safer smoking habits, increased use of flame-resistant fabrics could also break the ignition chain. NFPA also points out that the ignition of wearing apparel is a major source of fires and injuries in the home.

Beyond fire prevention, prompt fire detection offers the greatest hope for saving lives. Statistics show that the majority of home fires occur between midnight and 8 a.m., with many fires burning for upwards of 20 or 30 minutes before detected. NFPA points out that no matter how skilled at fire fighting a fire department may be, firemen cannot save many victims because they died before the fire was detected.

For this reason, no home should be without one or more smoke detectors for early warning. Many fire companies offer free literature on the proper location of smoke detectors. Home insurance companies offer many similar publications on detectors and fire safety programs for the home.

For additional information about smoke detectors and installation in the home, write Smoke Detectors, Washington, D.C. 20207.

INDEPENDENT STUDY CONFIRMS ASBESTOS HAIR DRYER HAZARD

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has received an independent analysis which confirms that asbestos fibers emitted from hair dryers may pose a significant health threat to consumers.

This analysis indicates that the majority of the hair dryers tested were found to be emitting asbestos fiber levels comparable to or greater than other serious levels of asbestos in the general environment, such as those found in certain school buildings and near construction sites.

The test results and independent analysis will become part of the scientific foundation for CPSC's investigatory approach toward regulation of asbestos in other consumer products.

A test survey of 30 hair dryers manufactured with asbestos was conducted during the past summer for CPSC by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Analysis of the fiber emission levels reported in the survey was performed for CPSC by Dr. William J. Nicholson, who is recognized throughout the international health community as an expert on the health effects of exposure to asbestos. Dr. Nicholson is an associate of Dr. Irving J. Selikoff at the Environmental Sciences Laboratory, Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City.

CPSC TV SPOTS WIN EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Public service announcements produced for the Consumer Product Safety Commission have won several recent awards for excellence.

Two television spots have been awarded first prize in the "Addy" regional competition in New York. One gave tips on chain saw safety; the other was an animated spot which demonstrated general household safety tips (electrical hazards, bathtub hazards, stair hazards, etc.).

The "Addy" competition is conducted by the American Advertisers Federation, an organization of commercial advertisers. The national competition for these awards will be held in the spring of 1980.

The "Wheels" spot, which describes the hazards of children's recreational products and the "lumberjack" spot received awards for creativity in the U.S. Television Commercial Festival in Chicago. The "Wheels" ad was a finalist for the "Clio" competition last year. The "Clio" award is the advertising field's equivalent to the Academy Awards.

FUN IN THE SNOW — FOLLOW SAFETY RULES

Three products that can make wintery weather more enjoyable for children and adults are sleds, toboggans and snow disks. However, last year an estimated 50,000 injuries associated with these three products required hospital emergency room treatment.

Case histories on file with the Consumer Product Safety Commission illustrate that the major problems with these products fall into categories: mechanical and structural problems; riding conditions or loss of control; and collision with a moving car, another slider, or a stationary object.

Mechanical and structural problems of sleds, toboggans, and snow disks include: splintering or breaking of the product while in use; flimsy materials used in construction; and poor steering. Poor riding conditions include bumps, ruts, rocks, tree stumps and branches which are especially dangerous if partially hidden by snow. Icy conditions, patches of soft snow, or bare patches may cause loss of control.

SAFETY TIPS

Here are some tips for selecting, using and maintaining a sled, toboggan or snow disk with safety:

1. **Selection**
   - Check for sturdy construction. Avoid split or splintered wood and metal parts bent out of shape, especially when buying second-hand equipment.
   - Look for secure handholds.
   - Avoid equipment with sharp, jagged edges and protruding rivets.
   - Look for an energy absorbing pad for the seat of toboggans.
   - Check sleds for easy steering.
   - Avoid sleds with runners that end in sharp-edged hooks. Runners that curve continuously around to the top of the sled and connect with the side rails may be safer.
2. **Use**
   - Inspect the sledding area before using it; avoid bumps, tree stumps, boulders, ice and bare spots.
   - Use extra caution when sliding at night or in twilight, since you might not see hazards. Better yet, it's best not to slide at night.
   - Supervise children inexperienced in using this kind of snow equipment. Make sure their first slides are on short, gradual slopes that are clear of debris or bumps.
   - Warn children not to push, shove, or otherwise roughhouse while riding sleds, toboggans and snow disks.
   - Figure out beforehand how you will stop the vehicle or get off safely in an emergency. For example, learn how to roll sideways off sleds to lessen injury in a collision.
   - Don't use streets for sliding unless they are closed to traffic.
   - Don't slide through traffic intersections, across streets, or out of alleys into streets, even if cars are not in sight at the time. They can appear suddenly!
   - Hold or tie ropes on top of equipment to keep ropes from slipping underneath and causing an abrupt stop.
   - Never "hitch" a ride behind cars while on a sled.
   - Don't slide until the slope

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FURNITURE INDUSTRY GIVEN 1 YEAR TO REDUCE HAZARD

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission moved recently to reduce the number of fire deaths and injuries in the U.S. by approving a one-year trial period for a program designed by industry to reduce the cigarette ignition of upholstered furniture.

The voluntary program, developed by the Upholstered Furniture Action Council (UFAC), came in response to a draft mandatory safety standard for upholstered furniture which the Commission considered in November, 1978. UFAC is an industry trade organization headquartered in High Point, North Carolina, and comprised of five large furniture associations which represent approximately 80 per cent of the upholstered furniture industry's annual sales volume.

In 1978 CPSC staffers recommended that the Commission issue a mandatory federal safety standard. At that time, the furniture industry had not devised a program that could produce upholstered furniture which would resist cigarette ignition. The voluntary plan, which was developed by industry in early 1979, has resulted in "significant progress" toward the goal of manufacturing such furniture, CPSC staff reported recently.

Every year upholstered furniture fires caused by smoldering cigarettes kill at least 500 people and seriously injure an additional 1,700, according to CPSC estimates. However, CPSC does not have the authority to regulate cigarettes as an ignition source or in any other way.

In 1976, there was an attempt to amend a CPSC law so that cigarettes as an ignition source would be placed within CPSC's regulatory jurisdiction. Congress did not approve the amendment.

Since CPSC does not have authority to regulate cigarettes -- the ignition source of an estimated 33,000 fires in upholstered furniture every year -- CPSC has concentrated on efforts to reduce the flammability of household items commonly ignited by cigarettes. CPSC flammability standards for such household items as mattresses, rugs and carpets now are in effect.

UFAC representatives told the Commission that they will renew their efforts to encourage the tobacco industry to develop and market self-extinguishing cigarettes.

Much of the success of the UFAC voluntary program rests on the council's ability to secure pledges from manufacturers to produce upholstered furniture according to explicit UFAC safety criteria. Pledges already have been obtained from more than 200 firms, which account for approximately 70 per cent of the annual U.S. dollar volume of upholstered furniture sales.

UFAC officials project that by the end of 1982 manufacturers' pledges will represent approximately 80 per cent of the annual dollar volume, and approximately 95 per cent of the domestic dollar volume by the end of 1984.

Under the trial program, only furniture meeting the UFAC safety requirements will prominently display UFAC tags explaining the product's conformance to the voluntary program.

CPSC staff soon will develop a "Consumer's Buying Guide" on the flammability of upholstered furniture to aid consumers in making informed purchasing decisions.

IRLG PRINTS BOOKLET ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES

A new booklet, "Publications on Toxic Substances, A Descriptive Listing," has been published by the Interagency Regulatory Liaison Group (IRLG). The IRLG is a group of federal agencies which administer laws dealing with various areas of public health and safety.

The 96-page booklet presents some basic facts about toxic substances and provides an annotated bibliography of publications on toxic substances available from four of the five IRLG agencies. These four agencies administer a total of 17 laws that control the way toxic substances are manufactured, packaged, distributed, used, stored and disposed of today.

Most of the publications concern toxic substances and products commonly found in the home, the workplace, the environment and in agriculture. The booklet represents the first time the IRLG has developed a joint bibliography on subjects of common interest to its member agencies. IRLG was initiated in 1977 in response to the President's promise to eliminate waste and duplication in government.

Dr. Elizabeth F. Johnson, of CPSC's Consumer Awareness Division, was project officer for the publication with Deborah Gordon, also of CPSC, assisting. The project was coordinated by a four-member panel representing each of the other three agencies - the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The bibliography will include publications of IRLG's newest member, the Food Safety and Quality Service (FSQS) of the Department of Agriculture.

The booklet is available through each of the agencies' headquarters or field offices.

CPSC STATES' TASK FORCE HOLDS 2-DAY MEETING

The six members of the States' Task Force to CPSC's field operations state and local cooperative program met in Washington in late November for a two-day conference to discuss ways to broaden the effectiveness of the agency's programs. It was the second meeting of the task force, which serves as an advisory body to CPSC's Directorate for Field Operations.

The States' Task Force is composed of six of the 53 State Designees. State Designees are appointed by the governors of their respective states and serve as the primary liaison between the Commission and state and local authorities for consumer product safety related activities.

The group met in round table discussions with the Chairman and Commissioners, Executive Director Richard A. Gross, Edwin L. Tinsworth, Associate Executive Director for Field Operations, and other members of the Field Operations staff.

Representatives of the Office of General Counsel also attended. Mana Jennings, of OGC, participated in a discussion on ways to strengthen CPSC's recall outreach efforts. These included increased use of state and local authorities, local press coverage and state and local recall inspections.

CPSC Executive Director Gross told the group that he expects "CPSC is going to do more enforcement over the next few years. . . . . "

Members attending the meeting were: E. Edsel Moore, director, Pesticide & Consumer Product Safety, Kentucky Department for Human Resources; Mrs. Rosemary Pooler, chairwoman and executive director, New York State Consumer Protection Board; Ms. Mary Kay Ryan, administrator, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; Christopher Wiant, program administrator, Illinois Department of Public Health; and Ms. R.Y. Woodhouse, director, State of Washington Department of Motor Vehicles; and James L. Thomas, assistant director, Food and Drug Division, Tennessee Department of Agriculture.

WRAP-UP OF CPSC AREA OFFICE NEWS

During the month of November, 1979 Area Office inspectors checked more than 300 refuse bins to verify that the owner firms were complying with provisions of consent agreements entered into earlier. CPSC has begun legal actions against some of the firms refusing to comply voluntarily with provisions of the agency's ban against unstable refuse bins. The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia assessed a $2,000 civil penalty against one refuse bin hauling firm. The Philadelphia AO had found that the firm's bins violated CPSC's ban and the firm had not taken voluntary action to have the bins retrofitted.

The Boston AO and representatives of other IRLG agencies (EPA, FDA, OSHA and FSQS) are preparing a series of seminars on asbestos to be held in the late spring.

An investigator from the Kansas City Area Office was instrumental in helping obtain an undercover purchase of illegal M-80 firecrackers made by the Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The result: more than $15,000 worth of the illegal M-80s were confiscated.

During November and December, 1979 the AOs assisted a number of civic, school and business groups in sponsoring holiday safety programs.

FUN IN THE SNOW from page 4

is clear of nearby sliders who could block your path.

- Move off busy slopes quickly when you reach the bottom to avoid being run into.
- Walk back up the slope along a side path out of the way of those coming down.

3. **Maintenance and Storage**
   - Don't leave vehicles outdoors overnight since prolonged exposure to moisture and cold could reduce the safe life of your equipment.
   - Dry off vehicles thoroughly before storing.
   - Occasionally rub sled runners and other metal parts with candlewax to make them coast easily and keep them rust-free.
   - Lubricate metal bolts, pivots and rivets with a drop or two of oil for rust-free use and easier steering (on sleds).
   - To protect against moisture, wax any wooden parts when you remove the vehicle from storage at the beginning of the season and again before you store it at the end of the winter.
   - Sand smooth or repair any rough or splintered wooden parts. Don't use the equipment until it is repaired.

PRODUCT SAFETY — IT'S NO ACCIDENT

CPSC MEMO is published monthly by the Office of Communications, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent regulatory agency charged with reducing unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products. CPSC is headed by five Commissioners appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Commissioners are Susan B. King, Chairman; Sam Zagoria, Vice-Chairman; R. David Pittle; Edith Barksdale Sloan; and Stuart M. Statler. Use of funds for printing this publication through September 30, 1982, approved by the Office of the Management and Budget.

U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20207

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FEBRUARY 1980 FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

CPSC Chairman Susan B. King (left) and Esther Peterson, Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs, discuss CPSC's role in the newly-formed Consumer Affairs Council.

A FIRST FOR CONSUMERS—

CONSUMER AFFAIRS COUNCIL TO BE GOVERNMENTWIDE

For the first time, all Executive Branch agencies will have an office specially designated to deal with issues of concern to consumers.

On September 26, 1979, President Carter issued Executive Order No. 12160 calling for all cabinet-level agencies to report to his advisor on consumer affairs about how they plan to deal with consumer needs. The Order also established a Consumer Affairs Council to provide leadership and coordination of government consumer programs. The Council is composed of representatives of the 12 cabinet-level departments and is chaired by Esther Peterson, the Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs.

Although the Executive Order does not technically apply to independent agencies, such as CPSC, Chairman Susan B. King has expressed full support for the program and the Consumer Affairs Council. CPSC, in fact, worked with Mrs. Peterson's Office of Consumer Affairs on the project, and CPSC is now re-examining its consumer activities to be sure they reflect the President's overall program.

The consumer program of each agency must contain at least the following five elements:

(1) A professional consumer affairs staff authorized to participate in the development and review of all agency rules, policies, programs and legislation. Each agency must designate a senior-level official

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CPSC URGES DISAPPROVAL OF UF FOAM INSULATION

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has strongly recommended that the Department of Energy (DOE) delay inclusion of urea formaldehyde (UF) foam insulation in DOE's Residential Conservation Service Program (RCS). This program is intended to encourage the installation of energy conservation measures, including home insulation, in existing homes.

CPSC's Executive Director Richard A. Gross testified January 21, before a Department of Energy public hearing, that long-term, low-level exposure to formaldehyde may have acute adverse health effects.

UF foam insulation, which has been installed in more than 500,000 individual homes across the nation since 1976, is being considered by DOE for inclusion in the RCS program. Mr. Gross testified that DOE has agreed to assure the safety and efficacy of UF foam before including the product in its program, but thus far has been unable to assure the safety of UF foam.

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MASSACHUSETTS BANS UF FOAM

Because of the human health implications, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has banned all future use of urea formaldehyde (UF) foam insulation in residential dwellings.

The Massachusetts decision followed extensive public hearings during which homeowners complained that their medical problems stemmed from noxious gases released by UF foam in their homes. Some said they were forced to vacate their homes on orders from their physicians.

Homeowners complained of respiratory illnesses, skin and eye irritations, headaches and other problems. Industry has filed suit to overturn the ban.

STUDY ESTIMATES CPSC CUT 100,000 INJURIES

Activities of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to improve the safety of consumer products reduced product-associated injuries by approximately 100,000 in calendar year 1978, according to estimates based on data from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System.

It is estimated a further reduction of approximately 240,000 injuries will occur each year when all unsafe products now in the hands of consumers have been replaced by products meeting present CPSC standards and

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UF FOAM COMPLAINTS ARE AIRED AT HEARINGS

In response to more than 500 consumer complaints about formaldehyde odors, the Consumer Product Safety Commission has been conducting regional hearings to accept testimony about urea formaldehyde (UF) foam insulation.

Hearings have been held in Portland, Ore., Atlanta, Ga., Minneapolis, Minn. The final session is planned for February 26 in Hartford, Conn.

At the Portland hearing, CPSC Commissioner Sam Zagoria said: "Formaldehyde is a strong sensitizer. This means that individuals exposed to it may experience increasingly severe reactions at lower and lower levels of exposure. In addition, after prolonged exposure, individuals may suffer adverse health effects for longer and longer periods."

Peter Breysse of the University of Washington's Environmental Health Department told the hearing that his department inspected 53 dwellings and 343 mobile homes in the last 30 months, all of which had UF foam insulation. In the 53 homes, a total of 68 residents said they experienced health problems attributed to the formaldehyde gas; in the mobile homes, 536 residents voiced similar complaints.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS COUNCIL

from page 1

who will report directly to the head of the agency and whose sole responsibility will be the coordination of the consumer program.

(2) Consumer participation in the development of agency rules, policies and programs.

(3) Informational materials for consumers.

(4) Consumer education and training of agency staffs.

(5) A system to handle consumer complaints.

In addition, each agency must separate resources for its consumer programs from its budget to prove its adequacy.

The proposed consumer plans of the Federal agencies were published in the *Federal Register* on December 10, 1979 (Vol. 44, No. 238, pp. 71101-71398). Although CPSC and other independent agencies are not required to do so, CPSC published its current consumer participation and informational programs in this issue to show its support of the President's Order. Consumers may comment on the proposals until March 10, 1980. To receive a copy of the *Federal Register*, write: Dept. 645-H, Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009. The final programs are due to be published in June 1980, and take effect 30 days later.

Consumers who wish to meet with representatives from more than 40 Federal agencies to discuss their proposed consumer programs are invited to a conference being held by the Consumer Affairs Council Feb. 6, 1980. For more information on this conference, call Belle O'Brien of the White House Consumer Affairs staff at 202-456-6226.

In Atlanta at the second of four regional public hearings focused on urea formaldehyde foam insulation, from left, Executive Director Richard A. Gross, Leslie A. Pounds, Atlanta Area Office director, and David Arthur, consumer safety officer, examine a device used to measure formaldehyde gas in the air. The regional hearing was held by the Commission as part of its investigation into the safety and health effects of formaldehyde in consumer products.

CPSC URGES UF FOAM DISAPPROVAL

from page 1

The Commission is troubled by the more than 500 consumer complaints about the "acute" (or more immediate) health effects of exposure to formaldehyde at low concentrations.

The range of acute symptoms include:

- **difficulty in breathing (resembling asthma, in some cases)**
- **serious irritation of the eyes, nose and throat**
- **skin irritation and eczema-like rashes**
- **headaches and dizziness**
- **nausea and vomiting**
- **severe nose bleeds**

During the hearing Mr. Gross also disclosed that the Commission is concerned about further preliminary test results from a cancer study being conducted for the Chemical Industry Institute for Toxicology. Preliminary results have shown that a number of the rats tested have experienced squamous cell carcinoma due to formaldehyde exposure. The two-year study of several hundred laboratory rats and mice being subjected to varying doses of formaldehyde gas by inhalation has reached the stage of three-fourths completion.

CPSC concerns over consumer exposure to formaldehyde are not limited to UF foam insulation, since formaldehyde is an ingredient in many different consumer products, including textiles, paper, cosmetics, and wood products.

An estimated 6.5 billion pounds of formaldehyde are produced annually by American industry, with about half of the annual production going into wood products such as plywood, fiber board, and particle board. In these products formaldehyde is combined with urea of phenol to create an inexpensive, effective binding agent.

CPSC currently is awaiting results of research it commissioned last year from several scientific agencies, including the National Academy of Sciences and the National Toxicology Program, on the effects of exposure to formaldehyde.

SNOWBLOWERS CAN BE DANGEROUS

Snowblowers can eliminate much of the drudgery of shoveling snow-covered walks and driveways — but they can also be dangerous, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

During 1978, it is estimated some 4,500 persons were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries suffered in snowblower accidents. Most of the injuries were finger lacerations or amputations.

The majority of the injuries were suffered while the operator tried to clear the machine's discharge chute or auger without stopping the motor. Not waiting for the impeller blades to stop, even if the motor has been shut off, also can result in serious injuries.

Users have been injured while repairing or adjusting the blower with the motor running.

Whether gas-powered or electric, snowblowers are power tools which may have unguarded chains, sprockets and other moving parts that can catch clothes and fingers. Hot, exposed mufflers can burn; spilled gasoline fuel can cause explosions and burns. Improper grounding, the cutting of a cord or the use of a frayed cord or extension cord are other hazards of the electrically powered machines.

The manufacturers of snowblowers, through the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), sponsored the development of a voluntary safety standard which has been approved as American National Standard B71.3. This standard establishes safety requirements that address the significant risks of injury from snowblowers, including the hazard of clearing chutes of clogged snow.

New snowblowers bearing the statement "Conforms to ANSI B71.3" should be expected to be in conformity with the industry's standard.

Some suggestions for safer use of snowblowers:

- **Become familiar with the machine, its operation, hazards, safety instructions and warning labels.**
- **Adjust to proper height, if clearing a gravel driveway.**
- **Be sure the machine is in neutral and all blades disengaged before starting.**
- **Brace yourself and the machine while starting, keeping well away from the auger.**
- **Keep hands and feet clear of auger housing at all times.**
- **Never attempt to unclog discharge chute until the blades have stopped rotating.**
- **Don't hurry; watch for slippery surfaces. Wear sturdy shoes and close-fitting clothes.**

And, if you are using a gas-powered machine:

- **Keep gasoline in tightly closed safety can, in well ventilated area, away from children.**
- **Never refuel indoors - the unseen vapors may be ignited by a spark.**
- **Wipe up all spilled gasoline. Remember, NO SMOKING, when fueling.**

CPSC WORKS WITH INDUSTRY FOR SAFER SNOWMOBILES

CPSC estimates there are more than two million snowmobiles in use in this country. The number of injuries and fatalities associated with their use grows as snowmobiling increases.

In 1978, an estimated 25,000 persons were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries suffered in snowmobile accidents. A number of accidents were fatal.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has been working with the Snowmobile and All Terrain Vehicle Committee of the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) to develop voluntary safety standards for snowmobiles. To date, the SAE Committee has issued 15 standards for snowmobile components and systems and has proposed four more. An industry sponsored Snowmobile Safety Certification Committee (SSCC) certifies snowmobiles that meet these voluntary standards.

Many states have laws on licensing, registration, hours of operation and trespassing.

The majority of snowmobile accidents involve collisions with other moving vehicles or fixed objects. Injuries are apt to be relatively severe, frequently causing fractures and lacerations. Most victims are males, between the ages of 15 and 44.

Excessive speed, traveling over unfamiliar and rough terrain, night driving, or mechanical failure and inadequate maintenance frequently cause accidents. Pushing the vehicle beyond its designed limits has also contributed to accidents.

Striking hidden or hard-to-see objects, such as fences, rocks, small trees or other objects, can be hazardous.

Snowmobile engine noise makes it hard for operators to hear other vehicles. This and operator carelessness contribute to significant numbers of injuries and deaths.

Some tips for safer snowmobiling:

- **The clothes you wear may be as important as the snowmobile. Basics should include a one or two-piece snowmobile suit with water-repellant covering and lightweight, highly insulated linings; and a safety helmet with non-fogging visor or goggles. Also, wear a face mask for warmth and protection.**
- **Snowmobile mitts or gloves which allow the driver to operate controls properly are needed as are thermal underwear and socks.**
- **Always make pre-use inspection of your machine, checking the throttle, brake controls, fuel, steering, drive belt and the track.**
- **Check for loose parts or other obvious defects. Make certain the hood is properly fastened. Remove any snow and ice buildup from lights, windshield and running boards.**
- **Check the weather forecast — and the wind chill index.**
- **Never snowmobile alone.**
- **Drive only on established and marked trails or in specified areas. Avoid waterways — frozen lakes and rivers can be fatal.**
- **Avoid rocks, trees, fences, particularly barbed wire, ditches and other obstacles.**
- **Slow down at the top of a hill — and don't hurdle snowbanks. You have control only when your skis are on the ground.**
- **Know and obey your snowmobile traffic laws and regulations. Use common sense and stop at roads or railroad tracks. Signal your directions to other drivers.**

INJURIES CUT *from page 1*

industry voluntary standards.

National Center for Health Statistics and state health department data indicate there has been a decline of 2,500 deaths associated with home accidents (13 per cent) since 1973 when CPSC was activated.

Approximately 80,000 of the 100,000 estimated reduction in injuries were derived from actual injury data. Product areas for these injury reductions were poisonings, sleepwear, cribs, toys and matches.

The remaining 20,000 reduction in injuries were estimates based on a combination of available data and "predictive" evaluations. These product areas were architectural glazing, bicycles, fireworks, extension cords, bathtubs and showers, ladders, and ranges and ovens.

The number of injuries prevented in various product areas is as follows:

Estimated Injuries and Deaths Prevented in FY79

Product Area	Injuries Prevented	Deaths Prevented
Poisonings	65,000	40
Sleepwear	2,300	57
Cribs	3,200	50
Toys	5,000	2
Matches	4,000	--
	79,500	149

Selected Product Injury Reduction (Estimates)

Product	1979 Injury Reduction	Ultimate reduction annually
Architectural Glazing	3,500	58,400
Lawn Mowers	Effective 12/81	22,400
Bicycles	12,700	47,500
Fireworks	2,200	4,500
Bathtubs and Showers*	200	12,500
Ladders*	700	12,000
Ranges and Ovens*	200	3,200
	19,500	160,500

*Voluntary Standards

These estimates are reported in CPSC's 1980 Annual Report which is scheduled for distribution during January and February. Copies of the 1980 Annual Report (see Part II, appendix L) are available from the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Va. 22151.

CPSC has jurisdiction over more than 10,000 consumer products. The agency now enforces mandatory regulations, standards, bans or labelling requirements for at least 220 of these products.

The Commission has been involved in 63 voluntary standards development projects since 1973. This has resulted in 54 new standards and final revisions of 18 existing standards. Some projects produced two or more standards.

Some voluntary standards projects have produced significant improvements in consumer product safety. Some examples are: television sets; snowblowers; glass soft drink bottles; high chairs; lawn mowers; playpens; ranges and stoves; aerosol sprays; cigarette lighters; electric fans; and electric heating pads.

CPSC AND STATES WORK FOR AMUSEMENT RIDE SAFETY

CPSC has initiated an innovative program of Federal-State cooperation to increase amusement ride safety. In 1978, 16 persons died in these rides at amusement parks, fairs and carnivals. As late as October, 1979, it was reported that one person was killed and 14 injured in an amusement ride accident in Texas.

Hazards in the design or manufacturing process will continue to be acted upon by CPSC. Many accidents, however, are the result of poor maintenance, inspection, transportation, or set-up or operation problems which could best be handled through inspections by State and local agencies. Currently, 16 states have active amusement ride safety inspection programs. CPSC expects more states to pass such legislation with Federal encouragement and assistance.

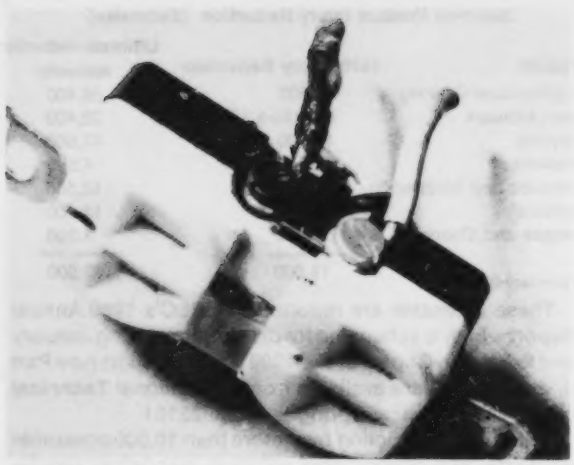
If states take the responsibility for inspections and other local regulation of rides, CPSC will be able to eliminate the expense and manpower otherwise needed to train Federal employees to be specialists in the field. The states will benefit by being able to gear their requirements for rides according to local needs, and by learning about other states' safety work.

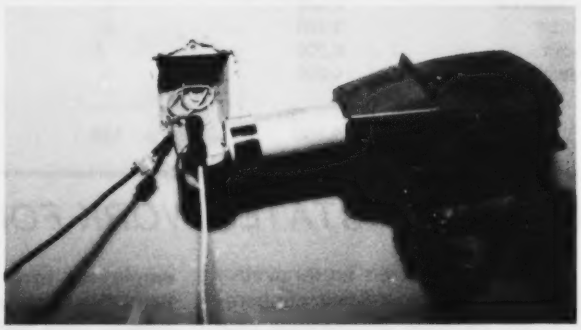
CPSC's innovative Federal-State cooperative efforts began with a National Conference of the States on Amusement Ride Safety in September, 1979. For the first time, amusement ride safety officials from the states were brought together and for many, this was their first direct contact with CPSC. The conference was hosted by the Maryland Division of Labor and Industry, and funded by a grant from CPSC. Representatives from 39 states, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands attended, as well as interested persons from the amusement ride industry. CPSC distributed a *Directory of State/Local Enforcement Officials* for amusement and similar rides, which will aid direct contact between state officials.

Before this conference, in the summer of 1979, CPSC surveyed 22 different amusement ride locations or firms to check on safety practices and to gain a better understanding of the problems involved in amusement ride safety.

For the spring and summer of 1980, the Commission staff has proposed a more extensive program that would involve state agencies. The proposal entails: 1) an information exchange program, with states reporting specific safety problems to CPSC, which would then compile these reports into biweekly bulletins to be distributed to all the states; 2) soliciting and maintaining contact with the industry, including trade organizations; and 3) developing emergency means of disseminating information.

The Commission staff also recommends that CPSC encourage the development of voluntary standards to increase the safety of amusement rides and additional training for CPSC investigators.





NEW METHOD MAKES WIRING SAFER

A new method for connecting aluminum wiring to short pieces of copper wire at outlets will, in CPSC's view, reduce the fire hazard in "old technology" aluminum wired houses. CPSC's supervisory electrical engineer Bill King and an electrician remc ved an aluminum wired electrical outlet in a house wired with "old technology" aluminum wiring and found the wiring insulation bubbled and charred. This could have led to a fire. Above right, King points to the juncture where a short addition of copper wire is being connected to the house's original aluminum wiring by use of a special compression connector. Below, the connector may be seen more clearly in the open power tool. The lower picture shows the electrician using an electric hot air blower to shrink insulating plastic tubing in place over the connector. The copper wire is then connected to the outlet device in a normal fashion. CPSC believes this method is the best technology available today, as it offers a permanent repair for "old technology" aluminum branch circuits.

CPSC PUBLISHES 1980 PRIORITY PROJECTS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has published a list of priority projects for fiscal year 1980 in the December 26, 1979 *Federal Register*.

The list is divided in two parts. There are 14 hazard-related projects designated for priority attention and 9 long-range commitments by the Commission to improve its regulatory processes.

The following are hazard-related: aluminum wiring; cellulose insulation; unvented gas-fired space heaters; coal and wood burning stoves; upholstered furniture; cribs; CB antennas; projectile toys; plastics flammability; tap water scalds; formaldehyde toxicity; benzidine dyes; asbestos and chain saws.

The 9 programs to improve regulatory processes are:

- Strengthening the chronic hazards program to increase the Commission's ability to deal with substances that may cause long-term chronic injury or illness, especially cancer.
- Considering voluntary standards as an alternative or supplement to mandatory regulation.
- Increasing the use of section 15 of the Consumer Product Safety Act (CPSA) to remove substantially hazardous products from the marketplace quickly.
- Exploring ways in which the effectiveness of product recalls might be improved, to ensure that consumers receive adequate notice of and protection from substantially hazardous products.
- Surveying the Commission's basic injury data needs and exploring new methods and sources of data collection.
- Improving the Commission's outreach to minorities, low income consumers, the elderly, and other special populations and more clearly explaining our role and impact to the general public.
- Expanding the use of the Commission Hotline and consumer complaints to help identify emerging hazards.
- Promoting greater cooperation with state and local agencies in areas of mutual concern such as smoke detectors, burn prevention, and amusement rides.
- Reviewing existing Commission product safety standards, bans, and other regulations to ensure that they are still serving important public safety goals.

Criteria considered for establishing priorities for Commission action are: frequency and severity of injuries, causality of injuries, chronic illness and future injuries, costs and benefits of Commission action, unforeseen nature of the risk of injury, vulnerability of the population at risk, probability of exposure to the hazard, and where appropriate, additional factors known to the CPSC staff and believed to warrant Commission attention.

The priority listings constitute general information to the public and guidance for the Commission staff in planning and executing their tasks. The list is subject to continuing review for additions or modifications that may be made necessary by more recent information, and the emergence of presently unforeseen hazards.

ARCHITECTURAL GLASS INJURIES REDUCED

Declining injury figures indicate that industry has been making and installing safer glass in American homes for the past three years.

January 6, 1980 marked the third anniversary of issuance of a mandatory Federal standard for architectural glazing materials, namely those materials used in storm door panels, combination doors, sliding patio doors, shower enclosures and bathtub doors. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission which issued the standard, the presence of safer glazing is the first step toward reducing the injuries sustained by consumers from broken glazing.

According to CPSC, an estimated 73,445 consumers sought emergency room treatment in 1975 for injuries suffered from glazing which had broken.

However, 12 months later, estimated injuries had declined by almost 9,000 because industry voluntarily moved to improve its glazing before the Federal safety standard went into effect on July 6, 1977. Over a four-year period, the government estimates that all injuries from broken glazing in buildings have declined by 13,000; moreover, continued reductions are anticipated as safer glazing replaces older glass, etc., that breaks in homes and public buildings.

Accompanying the injury decline has been lower hospital costs for emergency room treatment. By government estimate, the average cost to the injured consumer last year for emergency room treatment was almost $720.

The agency said this translated into an overall saving of $970,000 in 1978 alone because there were 1,365 fewer glazing injuries that year than in 1977.

While the performance specifications for glazing remain, the government has proposed a relaxation of one of the required tests for plastic glazing. The test calls for an accelerated weathering test to make sure that plastic retains its strength under simulated outdoor conditions. However, accidents may make such testing unnecessary. In 1978, an estimated 700 plastic glazing injuries occurred, but fewer than 50 were from broken plastic.

WRAP-UP OF CPSC FIELD OFFICE NEWS

The **San Francisco** Field Office is monitoring the recall of eight models of stuffed animal mobile toys — two of which have been involved in the strangulation deaths of two infants. The mobile toys were attached to three elastic cords by which they were intended to be suspended from ceilings.

The deaths occurred when the infants became entangled in the elastic cords. With the cooperation of state and local government offices, other CPSC field offices are also checking wholesalers and retailers to see that the mobile toys, recalled by their importer, have been removed from sale.

A member of the **Los Angeles** Field Office staff is working with a task force that is developing a fire safety coloring book. The book is to be used in teaching handicapped children. The project is sponsored by the Los Angeles City Fire Department's Educational Unit.

The **New York** Field Office investigated an accident in which a young boy suffered a broken knee when a refuse bin was tipped over on him. The FO tested the bin and found that it was in violation of the CPSC ban for certain unstable refuse bins.

The **Los Angeles** Field Office is conducting an investigation of bicycle dealers allegedly selling motocross-style bicycles which do not have chain-guards as required by CPSC's bicycle regulations.

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Washington, D.C. 20207

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MARCH 1980 FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

Al Riley, head of the Mechanical Test Branch of CPSC's Engineering Laboratory, checks an oxygen depletion sensor (ODS) for an unvented gas space heater. The sensor will automatically shut off the supply of gas to the heater when oxygen drops to a level that may be hazardous to life. The device has been used in Europe for more than 20 years to help avoid deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning.

CPSC TO WRITE LABEL FOR WOOD, COAL STOVES

The increasing use of coal and wood burning stoves has prompted the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to begin developing a labeling rule to reduce injuries and deaths from fires caused by these appliances.

Rough national estimates based on a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) survey of 15 states indicate that between 8,000 and 9,000 fires and 100 to 130 deaths are caused each year by wood or coal burning stoves. Chimney connectors for wood and coal stoves cause fires which account for another 15 to 20 deaths each year.

The major cause of these fires is reported to be improper installation of the appliance or connection of its chimney too close to a combustible surface.

CPSC is developing a proposed labeling rule which may require each manufacturer of wood or coal stoves or free-standing fireplaces:

- **to specify minimum clearances to combustibles and the type of chimney required, and**
- **to maintain records supporting the appropriateness of labeling information.**
- **In addition, the staff was instructed to develop options as needed for other types of installation and maintenance information.**

An estimated 5,700 persons were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries from these appliances in 1979, according to CPSC's National Electronic Injury Surveillance System. The majority of these injuries were contact burns in which the victim accidentally fell against or

continued back page

SEN. PROXMIRE PRAISES COMMISSION PROGRESS

Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wisc.) praised the progress of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission under the leadership of Chairman Susan B. King in his opening statement during recent Senate Appropriations hearings on the Agency's 1981 budget.

Senator Proxmire, Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development-Independent Agencies Subcommittee, said:

"I want to say, as one who has been very critical of the Commission in the past, that the Commission appears to be functioning much more efficiently at this point than at any time in its history. I'm sure that you deserve a great deal of credit for this improvement, Chairman King. It is very heartening to me to see the efforts you and your colleagues are making to reduce unnecessary expenditures and target your resources on significant consumer product problems.

"Let me hasten to add that I will not be entirely uncritical of your budget request for the coming year. In fact I think one reason the Commission has done so well of late is that Congress has forced tough priority decisions by keeping the Commission's budget a lean one. But I do want you to know that I am impressed by the Commission's progress over the past 12 months and look forward to a brighter future."

Chairman King, in her opening statement to the committee, said: "This request for $43,959,000 and 880 positions will permit the Commission to continue to protect consumers from hazardous products that, each year, kill 30,000 people and injure another 33 million.

"Based on the limited number of retrospective evaluations conducted to date, we can see dramatic drops in injuries and deaths -- about 100,000 fewer injuries in 1978 alone."

UFAC TAG INDICATES SAFER UPHOLSTERY

Consumers shopping for upholstered furniture may notice something new attached to the article--a gold tag that indicates the furniture is part of a new program.

These gold hang tags labeled UFAC (Upholstered Furniture Action Council) tell consumers that the furniture items displaying the tags are "made in accordance with UFAC construction criteria...engineered to reduce, but not necessarily eliminate, ignition by a burning cigarette..."

continued page 4

U. S. GOVT. PUBS. DEPOSITORY 376

Y3.C 76/3:

RECALLS

Consumers wishing to verify any model numbers of any recalls listed below may contact CPSC's toll-free Hotline at the following numbers: In the Continental U.S., dial 800/638-8326; in Maryland, 800/492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 800/638-8333.

TROLLEY TOY

A program to repair approximately 35,000 "Fun Ride Trolley Ride" toys which may seriously injure children is being conducted by the toy's manufacturer, Davis-Grabowski, Inc., of Miami, Florida.

The company is conducting the voluntary program in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The toy features four components: the trolley, which consists of two pulley-like grooved wheels encased within a plastic housing which supports two plastic handles; a 35-foot cable of either a single wire or seven intertwined strands of wire; and two clamps which serve to fasten the suspended cable around two tree trunks or posts. Once the cable is suspended, a child can propel himself along the cable by gripping the trolley's two handles.

Although the toy is advertised as being capable of supporting an adult's weight, the CPSC staff has been informed of nine incidents in which the cable broke under the weight of children and one incident in which it snapped under an adult's weight. These accidents reportedly resulted in concussions to a 9-year-old girl and a 42-year-old woman, back injuries to a 10-year-old girl, and minor cuts and bruises to two other children.

The trolley-ride toys were manufactured between January, 1976, and June, 1979. They have been sold nationwide for approximately $15.00 in retail stores and are packaged in boxes labeled with the model number 30/1000.

The manufacturer has agreed to mail consumers a free stranded cable to replace the single-wire cable, along with additional clamps to replace those sold with the toy. Anyone whose toy already includes the stranded cable will receive two additional clamps.

The stranded cable and clamps can be obtained by writing to: Davis-Grabowski, Inc., P.O. Box 381594, 74 N.E. 74th Street, Miami, Florida, 33138. Consumers should include their names and addresses and specify the type of cable sold with their toy (whether single or stranded wire).

PORTABLE HEATERS

Approximately 1,000 heavy-duty, model 267C, portable electric heaters which may pose a shock hazard to consumers are being recalled by their manufacturer, the Titan Sales Corporation, of Kansas City, Missouri.

The recall is being conducted voluntarily in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Some of the heaters were improperly wired during manufacture, allowing the heaters' metal casing to become electrified. No injuries have been reported to the manufacturer or the Commission.

Consumers should return the heaters to the place of purchase for free replacement or repair.

Intended for use in homes, classrooms and workshops, the heaters were manufactured with a baked enamel finish of tan and brown. The company name "Titan" appears above the control knob on the front of the heaters, and model number 276C is displayed on the back.

The 220-240 volt heaters were manufactured in July, 1979, and distributed from July through early November, 1979. They were sold nationwide in hardware stores and other retail outlets for approximately $88.95. The firm successfully has recalled from distributors approximately 70% of the 3,800 potentially defective heaters it produced.

The faulty units bear the following manufacturing date codes on a label on the bottom: **267-904-716, 267-904-717, 267-904-718, 267-904-719, 267-904-720, 267-904-723, 267-904-724, 267-904-725, 267-904-726** and **267-904-727.**

A special plaque was awarded to Robert Guenette (Division of Injury Collection) in recognition of his efforts with the Combined Federal Campaign while serving as CPSC's representative to the Loaned Executive Program.

NEARLY 2 MILLION RESPONSES RECEIVED BY CORNING

In the six months since the Corning Glass Works began a corrective action program for some 18 million coffee percolators, approximately two million consumers have responded.

Corning's voluntary corrective action plan, approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, was undertaken last September to remove its white glass-ceramic coffee percolators from consumer use. The pots, both electric and nonelectric, have been marketed in ten models since 1960. Some of the percolators could be dangerous to use because the handle and metal band may come loose from the pot without warning.

In a status report on the corrective action plan, Corning had received a total of 1,914,770 responses from consumers as of January 25.

Of that total, 1,819,857 responses had been made through the coupons from advertisements of the public notice Corning had run in nearly 700 newspapers throughout the country and in a widely-circulated homemakers' magazine. The additional 121,913 responses, as of that date, were received through letters generated by the public notice, the Commissioners were told.

Corning's incentive program, as approved by CPSC, includes several optional offers to the coffeemaker owners. In responding to the firm's public notice, owners are asked to identify their percolators by model, serial number and cup capacity. Then, based on the age of their models, the owners are offered several options.

The options range from a selection of two Corning Ware items at a 50 per cent discount (for pre-1970 models) to a choice of certain designated free items, a cash offer of five, ten or 15 dollars, or the cash amount applied to one or two Corning Ware items selected from a special catalogue (for the post-1970 models).

Of the January 25 total of 1,941,770 responses received, Corning had made 1,536,937 offers by that date. These were made to 1,058,950 owners of pre-1970 model pots and to 477,987 owners of post-1970 model pots.

Offers had not been made to some 174,000 consumers whose items were not subject to the program and offers to numerous others will be made when more product identification is supplied by those owners, the company stated.

SAFETY OF UF FOAM QUESTIONED BY CPSC

Whether urea formaldehyde (UF) foam insulation is safe enough to warrant the government's recommending its use as an energy-saving material in American homes will be decided soon by the U.S. Department of Energy, (DOE).

DOE is to announce its final decision in the near future after evaluating the comments of the public, industry, CPSC, and other Federal agencies as to the merits and health hazards of UF foam insulation. DOE's decision will have far-reaching effects since consumers will use the insulating materials recommended by the agency in its new Residential Conservation Services Program (RCS). The program details the many energy conservation measures that may be used by consumers, including insulation materials.

CPSC opposed the recommendation and asked for DOE not to include UF foam insulation in the RCS program until it can be demonstrated that the proposed DOE standards would be effective in controlling the amount of formaldehyde gas released from the product. According to CPSC Executive Director Richard A. Gross, "The issue is whether to include urea formaldehyde foam as an insulating material in the proposed standards despite disturbing and growing evidence of serious health problems associated with the release of formaldehyde gas into the living areas of homes insulated with the product."

Four public hearings over the past three months provided consumers with a forum to communicate directly with CPSC. Beyond this, the Commission has received over 600 complaints of adverse health effects from exposure to formaldehyde from UF foam insulation. Approximately 150 in-depth investigations were undertaken by agency personnel.

CPSC maintains that most consumers are not aware of the health hazards associated with formaldehyde exposure.

"Our reports indicate that very few of the complainants who contracted for installation of UF foam knew about the possible problems that might arise," CPSC said in its testimony to DOE. "We also know that the number of complaints reported increase when consumers are made aware of the possible problems with UF foam."

Preliminary test results from the Chemical Industry Institute for Toxicology (CIIT) also indicate formaldehyde exposure causes cancer in laboratory animals. "Formaldehyde causes cancer in laboratory rats at levels of 15 parts per million which is not that much higher than many consumer exposures," the CPSC submittal said. "While the potential human carcinogenicity of formaldehyde has not been determined, the present animal data should dictate a cautious approach to formaldehyde exposure."

Testimony by doctors and consumers at CPSC public hearings on UF foam insulation suggested a number of health problems associated with inhalation and exposure to formaldehyde gas. Among the problems cited were eye irritation; upper respiratory maladies such as sneezing, dry and sore throats, and sinus inflammation; lower respiratory problems, including asthma-like symptoms; gastro-intestinal distress, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea; headaches, dizziness, drowsiness, fatigue, skin rashes; and nose bleeds.

Finally, CPSC took exception with the DOE's proposed tolerable limits of free formaldehyde content.

Said Executive Director Gross, "The material standard for UF foam specifies that the free formaldehyde content of the fresh UF foam shall not exceed 0.3 per cent by weight. We have an investigative report of an incident where UF foam insulation was installed in the walls of a dwelling in Chicago in January, 1978. Odor was noticeable only on the days of installation, but two weeks later the family of four experienced eye irritation which continued almost daily with the most distress occurring on humid days." Mr. Gross said lab tests showed that air in the rooms contained between .8 and .95 parts per million of formaldehyde gas while a 3-month old sample of foam measured 0.2 per cent by weight, "thus, the proposed standard of 0.3 per cent may not have assured the general safety of the foam in that case."

FIRE HAZARD WARNING GIVEN ON HOME WIRING

As part of its efforts to ensure that consumers save energy safely, the staff of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has warned consumers of the potential fire hazard associated with home electrical systems.

In view of the national need to conserve energy, CPSC staff has emphasized that homeowners should have their electrical systems checked by a qualified individual before installing thermal insulation.

In a recent briefing session before the Commissioners, CPSC staff also stressed that faulty wiring by itself must be considered as a fire hazard with or without the presence of thermal insulation. CPSC estimates that more than 2,000 household fires occur every year when thermal insulation is ignited by faulty wiring or lighting fixtures. This figure amounts to about three per cent of the estimated 75,000 electrical system fires which occur annually in American homes.

The CPSC staff believes that the fire potential from damaged wiring or over-fused circuitry is greatly increased when the heat given off by the wiring (which normally is dissipated through free air circulation) is confined by thermal insulation.

The Commission endorses the efforts of consumers to conserve energy and lower their fuel expenditures, but also advises homeowners to have their wiring inspected in areas where the insulation is to be installed. A qualified individual should check for signs of deterioration and ensure that the fuses and circuit-breakers are of the proper size to provide protection.

Before installing any thermal insulation, consumers first should look for any signs of electrical wiring problems. These may include the frequent blowing of fuses or tripping of circuit-breakers, flickering of light bulbs, or electric outlet covers or switch plates which become hot.

UFAC VOLUNTARY PROGRAM

from page 1

UFAC is composed of representatives from six of the major U.S. furniture manufacturers' associations. It was formed to determine how to produce more cigarette ignition-resistant upholstered furniture and for the implementation by the manufacturers of the techniques developed.

In 1979 UFAC introduced its Voluntary Action Program (VAP). This program specifies the materials that must be used and construction methods for the production of upholstered furniture more resistant to cigarette ignition. UFAC permits only furniture meeting these requirements to display the gold UFAC hang tag.

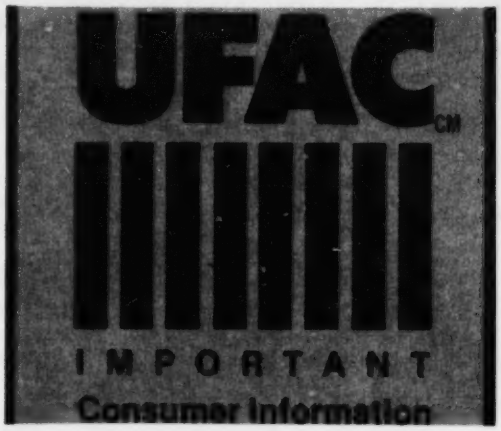
Last November the Consumer Product Safety Commission voted to defer any mandatory action on cigarette ignition of upholstered furniture for one year. The Commission has allowed the one-year period to help determine the effectiveness of the UFAC program to reduce cigarette ignition of upholstered furniture. During this year the UFAC voluntary program will be monitored closely by CPSC.

UFAC reports that more than 70 per cent (on a dollar-volume sales basis) of the industry has pledged to support the Voluntary Action Program. To further publicize and extend this program, UFAC conducted a series of seminars last month for manufacturers.

In addition, the National Retail Merchants Association, in cooperation with the National Home Furnishings Association, is conducting a series of seminars to inform sales personnel about the UFAC program.

During this year CPSC also will carry out several programs. These include:

- The purchase from the retail market of approximately 100 chairs/sofas displaying UFAC tags. Each furniture item will be tested to determine whether it is made in conformance with the UFAC requirements and whether it will resist ignition by cigarettes.
- A survey to help determine the extent that industry has pledged to support the voluntary program. Consumer deputies and volunteers working with CPSC field offices will visit retail stores and make overall counts of the hang tags on upholstered furniture items in the stores.
- A consumer information brochure is being prepared to assist consumers in purchasing upholstered furniture more resistant to ignition by cigarettes.
- **Cooperative government-industry research is being undertaken. Work by both UFAC and CPSC indicates that although the UFAC voluntary program has a strong potential for reducing the upholstered furniture cigarette-ignition problem, some furniture made in accordance with UFAC requirements will still ignite from a cigarette. The cooperative program is being undertaken at the National Bureau of Standards to determine the extent of the remaining problem and the techniques that may be needed to resolve it.**



The Upholstered Furniture Action Council (UFAC) gold tag (above) assures consumers that the product meets certain construction criteria that reduces the possibility of fire from lighted cigarettes. The accompanying label is reproduced below.

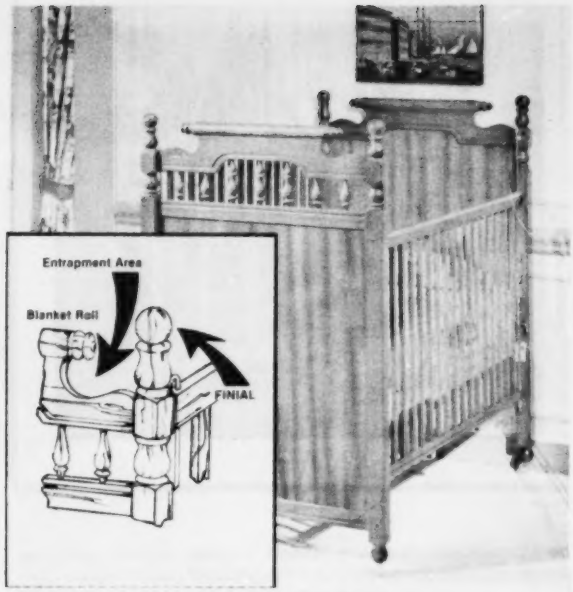
The manufacturer of this upholstered furniture certifies that with this cover fabric and filling material, the item is made in accordance with UFAC$_{CM}$ construction criteria that are engineered to reduce, but not necessarily eliminate, ignition by a burning cigarette by insulating or modifying certain materials or combinations of materials, traditionally used in upholstered furniture manufacturing, that are most susceptible to ignition.

Keep your family and furniture safe from fires caused by careless smoking. Even with modern UFAC$_{CM}$ - recommended materials and methods, smoldering cigarettes and other heat or fire sources can cause upholstery furniture fires.

For the protection of your family, UFAC$_{CM}$ recommends that you have at least one smoke detector in your home. An early warning of fire, starting from any cause, can help protect you and your family.

UFAC$_{CM}$ The Upholstered Furniture Action Council is an association of furniture manufacturers, retailers, and suppliers organized for the purpose of conducting research into more cigarette resistant upholstering methods and implementing them throughout the industry.

For further information write UFAC, Box 2436, High Point, NC 27261.



Bassett "Candlelite"

Bassett "Mandalay"

CRIB FIRM AGREES TO REMEDIAL PROGRAM

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission provisionally has accepted a consent agreement with Bassett Furniture Industries, Inc., involving two crib styles that could pose a life-threatening strangulation hazard to infants.

The terms of the agreement require Bassett to undertake an extensive remedial action program and to pay a $175,000 civil penalty. The firm estimates that the cost of the program, including the civil penalty, could be as high as $1 million.

The Commission provisionally approved the consent agreement on February 7 by a 3-2 vote, with Commissioners Zagoria and Statler dissenting. Both dissenting Commissioners believe that the amount of the civil penalty levied should be greater.

Bassett Furniture Industries, Inc., of Bassett, Virginia, is the manufacturer of the "Candlelite" and "Mandalay" style cribs which reportedly have caused six infant deaths since 1977.

CPSC staff believes that the cribs were designed in such a way that infants can trap their heads between a corner post and the headboard (or footboard) and strangle as they stand on the crib mattress.

The agreement pertains to the "Mandalay" crib models 5126-505, 5621-505 and 5225-515, and to "Candlelite" models 5028-505, 5028-510, 5127-505 and 5127-510. The model numbers can be found on an adhesive label affixed to the inside of the headboard below the mattress level.

The "Mandalay" cribs were manufactured from February, 1974, through October, 1976, and sold nationwide for approximately $100 to $125 in retail stores. The "Candlelite" cribs sold for approximately $100 nationwide, and were produced from December, 1975, to mid-October, 1977.

Consumers who own one of these cribs which has not yet been modified immediately should contact Bassett to obtain a free repair kit or instructions for eliminating the hazard. Consumers can contact Bassett at its toll-free number 1-800-336-5223. (In Virginia, consumers should place a collect telephone call to Bassett at (703) 629-7511, extension 340).

In its proposed complaint against Bassett, CPSC staff alleged that the two crib styles pose a substantial risk of strangulation injuries or death to infants. CPSC staff alleged that the firm knew as early as September, 1977 that its "Candlelite" cribs could cause strangulation deaths of infants, but that Bassett did not notify CPSC staff of the potential hazard as required by law. The complaint also alleged that Bassett knew (or should have known) in March, 1978 that the "Mandalay" cribs could present a strangulation hazard but failed to report to CPSC staff. In entering into the consent agreement, Bassett does not admit the existence of a substantial product hazard or a violation of any reporting requirements.

Bassett had been undertaking corrective action since February, 1978 to locate and modify the potentially hazardous cribs. Despite its efforts, approximately 4,700 "Mandalay" style cribs (out of an estimated 5,800 produced) and about 400 "Candlelite" cribs (of 1,654 produced) still may not have been modified to eliminate the hazard.

The central part of the consent agreement requires Bassett to take the unprecedented step of sending hazard notifications by direct mail to all parents who have had children within the previous 21 months. This mailing is expected to include more than four million parents of infants and young children.

In addition, Bassett will purchase advertising space in *TV Guide* and *Family Circle* magazines, in which they will run 1/2-page advertisements warning consumers of the potential crib hazard. These magazines have a combined total readership of more than 27 million people.

As an added incentive to consumers, Bassett will pay a $5 cash award to anyone who identifies the location of an unmodified crib, once its repair has been verified.

Bassett further has agreed to mail posters which describe the crib hazard and the needed safety modification to all obstetricians and gynecologists practicing in the U.S., as well as to all pediatric and maternity clinics, for display in their offices. As part of its earlier voluntary corrective action with CPSC, Bassett already has distributed posters to approximately 25,000 pediatricians and to some medical clinics.

In addition, Bassett agreed to pay a civil penalty of $175,000 settlement of CPSC staff's allegation that the firm failed promptly to report the alleged defect in the cribs.

The Commission will vote whether to give final approval to the agreement following a seven-day public comment period which opens on February 14, when the agreement is published in the *Federal Register*. Interested persons should submit their written comments by no later than February 21 to Office of the Secretary, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207.

The Commission will consider all comments in deciding whether to give final approval to the agreement.

COAL & WOOD STOVES *from page 1*

touched the surface of the stove.

Recently, there has been a dramatic increase in the use of coal and wood burning stoves, which is reflected in the production figures. Domestic production and importation of wood and coal burning stoves rose from an estimated 310,000 units in 1974 to 1,100,000 units in 1978.

Wood played a major role in the early development of America. In 1844, 95 percent of all energy needs in this country were furnished by wood. Coal, oil, and gas gradually became more popular at the turn of the century because they were easier to handle.

Fuelwood usually is measured by the standard cord. This is a stack of wood 4 feet by 4 feet by 8 feet containing 128 cubic feet. A "face" cord has only one third the volume of a standard cord. The term "rick" cord has no standard dimensions and simply refers to a stacked pile of wood.

The NFPA lists the following as major fire and safety hazards from wood burning stoves:

- Heat radiation from stove, stovepipe, and chimney to combustible surfaces,
- Sparks or glowing coals falling out of front loading stoves when opened,
- Flames leaking out of poorly maintained chimneys,
- Burning or glowing materials coming out of top of chimneys.

Creosote buildup in chimneys can be a serious problem. It can occur at any time. It may occur faster in overnight burns with airtight and high-efficiency stoves. Creosote is extremely volatile and burns rapidly when ignited. When a chimney fire occurs, call the fire department and close the inlet air damper to cut off the air supply. Rolled up wet newspapers or rock salt may then be thrown in the stove to help extinguish the fire.

If you install a wood stove, be sure to:

- Check with local code officials about woodburning stove installation.
- Make sure there are safe clearances between the stove and combustible floors, walls, and ceilings.
- Place the stove on a fireproof base.
- If the stove uses an existing fireplace chimney, have a competent brick mason inspect the chimney before hooking up the wood burning stove.
- Burn only dry, well-seasoned fuel-wood.
- Dispose of ashes in a closed metal container outside the house.
- Inspect the chimney periodically for creosote buildup.
- Instruct other members of the family on the safe and proper operation of the wood burning stove.
- Install smoke detectors to alert family members should a malfunction of the stove occur.
- Consult the owner's manual for installation and operating instructions.

CPSC FIELD OFFICE NEWS...

Members of the staff of the **Atlanta** FO assisted the staff of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in incorporating product safety information into the Board's new guide for the church's day care and kindergarten administrators. The guides will be made available to administrators in all 50 states and will be distributed in Southern Baptist book stores.

PRODUCT SAFETY, IT'S NO ACCIDENT.

CPSC MEMO is published monthly by the Office of Communications, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent regulatory agency charged with reducing unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products. CPSC is headed by five Commissioners appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Commissioners are Susan B. King, Chairman; Sam Zagoria, Vice-Chairman; R. David Pittle; Edith Barksdale Sloan; and Stuart M. Statler. Use of funds for printing this publication through September 30, 1982, approved by the Office of the Management and Budget.

U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20207

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FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

"REDUCE EXPOSURE"— FORMALDEHYDE STUDY

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has received a comprehensive study prepared for CPSC by the National Academy of Sciences recommending that consumer exposure to formaldehyde be reduced to the lowest practical level.

After extensive analysis of existing formaldehyde research in the international health community, the National Academy's Committee on Toxicology concluded that on the basis of available data "there is no population threshold for the irritant effects of formaldehyde in humans. Information from controlled human studies and complaint-related investigations suggests that, even at extremely low airborne concentrations, a proportion of the population will respond with some irritation."

After examining various tests of animal and human exposure to formaldehyde, and especially in view of increasing concern over the long-term or "chronic effects of exposure to the chemical (including its potential carcinogenicity), the National Academy study offered the recommendation that "formaldehyde be kept at the lowest practical concentration in indoor residential air."

The National Academy's study, which was commissioned by CPSC in May, 1979, provides additional evidence for the agency to consider as it develops regulatory alternatives for consumer products containing formaldehyde, which include a popular form of home insulation called urea formaldehyde foam insulation (UF foam), plywood and particle board, various textiles and carpeting, and some plastics.

Research compiled by the National Academy included two European studies reporting responses from humans

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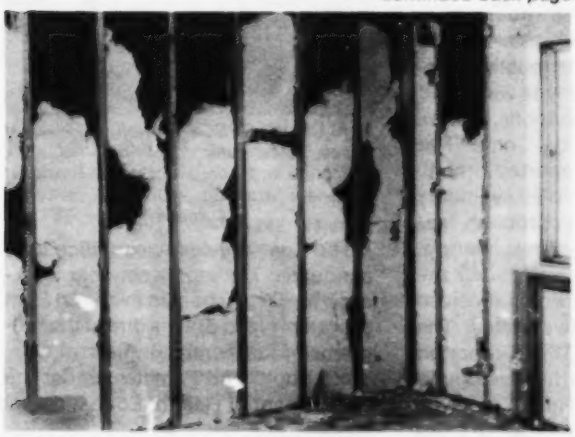
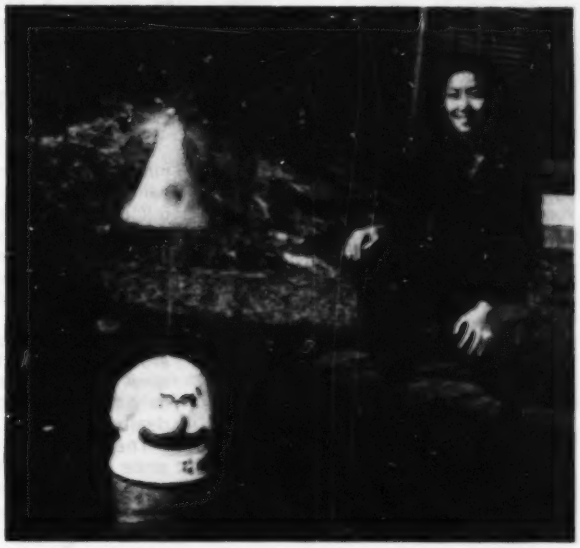


One source of formaldehyde gas in homes may be urea-formaldehyde foam insulation shown above installed in a wall. The wallboard has been removed to test the insulation.



Sandra Shimasaki, supervisory compliance officer with CPSC's Product Defect Correction Division, demonstrates the "Fun Fountain" water toy which may be hazardous to children. The water stream which causes the hat to rise in the air could cause injuries to children's eyes.

COMPANY TO "CORRECT" HAZARDOUS WATER TOY

A program to correct more than 100,000 outdoor "Fun Fountain" water toys which may cause serious injuries to children is being conducted by the Wham-O Mfg. Co. of San Gabriel, California.

The firm, in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, voluntarily will supply free corrective water flow control valve inserts for its "Fun Fountain" toys produced from 1977 through November 1979.

The toy consists of a clown hat and head which attaches onto the end of a garden hose so that the hat rises in the air when water flows through the clown's head. Children may be inclined to peer into the water outlet and the stream of water could cause serious eye injuries, especially in communities with high water pressure.

CPSC so far has been informed of two consumer complaints since June 1979, involving a six-year-old boy and a seven-year-old boy who suffered eye injuries when struck at close distance by water emitted from the "Fun Fountain" toys.

The Wham-O "Fun Fountain" water toys were sold nationwide in toy stores and variety stores for approximately $10.00 each. The model number of the toy, #237, is imprinted on the toy's package.

According to the company, the potential hazard has been corrected on all "Fun Fountain" toys manufactured

continued page 5

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RECALLS

Consumers wishing to verify any model numbers of any recalls listed below may contact CPSC's toll-free Hotline at the following numbers: In the Continental U.S., dial 800/638-8326; in Maryland, 800/492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 800/638-8333.

TOY RATTLES

More than 65,000 "Playpath Tracking Tube" toy rattles are being recalled because they pose a choking hazard to babies. The toys are being recalled voluntarily by their manufacturer, Johnson & Johnson Baby Products Company, of Piscataway, New Jersey.

The rattles consist of a 6.5-inch-long transparent tube capped at either end with a yellow bulb. One yellow bulb contains a bell inside and the other a squeaker. The tube is filled with a clear liquid and contains a red plastic ball.

CPSC has been informed of two incidents in which young children dislodged and choked on the squeaker.

The rattles were manufactured between March and November 1979, and sold exclusively through mail-order houses and Johnson & Johnson stores.

The manufacturer is mailing hazard notices directly to consumers who purchased the rattles. Consumers should return the product to the firm, using the prepaid mailing envelope, to receive a full refund, including reimbursement for postage costs and sales tax.

Consumers who have not received the hazard notice should write for instructions to Johnson & Johnson Baby Products Company, 220 Centennial Avenue, Piscataway, New Jersey 08854.

BABY RATTLES

More than 44,000 baby rattles which may pose a choking hazard to infants are being recalled. The recall is being conducted by their importer, A.A. Importing, Inc., of Mentor, Ohio.

The recall applies to three shapes of rattles: a safety pin, model H-957; a carousel, model H-1868; and a flower petal, model H-1869.

All three rattle types are banned as hazardous products because they do not meet Federal size requirements established to prevent infants from choking to death.

The rattles have been sold nationwide since December 1978, in toy stores and other variety stores.

Consumers should return the rattles to their retailers for a full cash refund.

TV ANTENNA KITS

CPSC has issued a warning of a possible electrocution hazard to consumers who purchased approximately 28,000 "Color Master" and "Video Master" outdoor television antenna kits. The antennas were manufactured by Lance Industries, of Sylmar, California.

As required by law, the antenna kits are not labeled with warnings that consumers may risk electrocution if the antennas contact electrical power lines while being installed or removed from roof tops.

Antennas are annually the largest single cause of electrocutions among consumer products, causing an average of approximately 200 electrocution deaths a year. Most deaths occur when the antennas brush against high voltage power lines while consumers are installing or removing them.

Retailers have been instructed to supply consumers with copies of the precautionary labels and instructions. Consumers should not attempt to install the antennas until they have received these warning notices.

Consumers can obtain free warning labels and instructions by contacting Lance Industries, 13001 Bradley Avenue, Sylmar, California 91342.

AREA OFFICE NEWS

Jerome Donovan, Director of CPSC's Boston Area Office, has received the Legion of Merit Award for his work as a disaster analyst while serving in the U.S. Army Reserves.

The **Dallas** Area Office staff has interviewed certain groups of minority, elderly and low income residents in five states to obtain information for the agency's evaluation of the effectiveness of product recalls. The consumers were asked to provide their suggestions on how CPSC could improve its efforts in informing them, or their respective groups, about the recall of unsafe/defective products.

Each of the Area Offices worked with the State and local governments, hospitals and professional and community organizations during February and March preparing for National Poison Prevention Week, March 17-21. Some examples of the special cooperative efforts were the Chicago Retail Druggists Association's mailing of pamphlets and other materials to its 500 members, and in the Atlanta area several hospitals showed CPSC safety films on their in-house television systems.

The third and fourth public hearings on urea formaldehyde were held in February in Minneapolis, Minn., and in East Hartford, Conn. The **Boston** Area Office reported that 40 witnesses, representing all segments of public interest in the problem, testified at the Connecticut hearing. More than 350 people attended the Minneapolis hearing, which received media coverage in five states. The **Minneapolis** Area Office reported that following the hearing the Minnesota Department of Health received an increase in the number of calls from consumers requesting that air samples be collected from their homes.

Don Ching, CPSC's Honolulu Resident Office Investigator, described his work with state and local programs in Hawaii at a recent training workshop in New Orleans.

The **Los Angeles** Area Office staff conducted a bilingual seminar workshop for 50 teachers in the Head Start program. Head Start is one of the programs of the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, under the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

"NO FRILLS" BUDGET SOUGHT FOR FY 1981

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has requested a "no frills" budget for fiscal year 1981 which will maintain employee strength at the present level and increase funds slightly.

The FY'81 budget request to Congress asks for 880 full-time, permanent employees, the same as it received in 1980. The FY'81 budget request is for $43,959,000, which is $2,339,000 more than the FY'80 appropriation. However, when funds remaining from a 1979 supplemental appropriation are subtracted, the increase is only $707,000.

Originally, CPSC had submitted a request for $47,434,000 and 903 positions in the FY'81 budget. However, the Office of Management and Budget recommended that the request be lowered to the Agency's current request.

Chairman Susan King told the Senate subcommittee during budget hearings, "the Commission reviewed (the OMB recommendation), recognizing the need to hold government spending to a reasonable level, and we believe that we will be able to provide essential services within (the lower budget figures).

"But it should be clear that this level of funding is a minimal level," she continued. "It provides only for those activities that we believe are absolutely necessary. The appearance of a new, serious hazard will mean that some other project or projects will be dropped."

Chairman King specified certain areas the Commission would emphasize if it received the requested funding. These areas include:

- **Chronic hazards, especially carcinogens. The agency plans to continue screening to identify possibly hazardous chemicals. CPSC is presently working on benzidine-type dyes, asbestos, formaldehyde, and carbon monoxide.**
- **Section 15 activities. Increased funding will allow us to continue to remove hazardous products from the marketplace quickly and efficiently. CPSC also will expand its notification methods to include consumer complaints, news clippings, and other sources of information, in addition to direct notification by business.**

On March 14, President Carter announced a Federal hiring freeze, retroactive to February 29, 1980. On March 27, the Consumer Product Safety Commission announced a hiring freeze on permanent full time, permanent part time and temporary positions. This is a result of the President's instructions and CPSC's own ceiling and budget limitations.

- **Energy conservation. The Commission will continue to stress "saving energy safely" while monitoring insulation materials, tightly sealed homes, and energy conservation devices. It plans to work closely with voluntary standards groups and coordinate activities with the Department of Energy.**
- **Federal/State/Local cooperation. CPSC intends to expand its involvement with other government units.**

In evaluating how the Commission's previous activities have served the public, Chairman King stated that there were "about 100,000 fewer injuries in 1978 alone." Some of the reductions were in the area of child-resistant closures on most prescription drugs and many household products - these meant 65,000 fewer poisonings of children under 5 in 1978. In addition, CPSC regulations for cribs have cut the annual death rate from cribs nearly in half.

According to "predictive evaluations," injury figures in the future should drop noticeably for the following products:

- **After all architectural glazing is replaced with materials meeting our safety standard, and estimated 60,000 fewer injuries will be treated in hospital emergency rooms each year.**
- **When all bicycles in use comply with our regulations, injuries should drop by about 50,000 each year.**
- **The newly issued safety standards for power mowers should eliminate nearly 80 percent of the nearly 80,000 injuries that occur each year from contact with the moving mower blade.**
- **A new voluntary standard for ladders should reduce injuries by about 12,000 annually.**

Although the CPSC budget hearings before the Senate and House subcommittees were completed in February, the agency will not know its funding and positions until the late summer or early fall.

April Is Proclaimed Cancer Control Month

President Carter has proclaimed April as Cancer Control Month. The President has asked "the medical and health professions, the communications industries, and all other interested citizens to unite in public affirmation of our Nation's abiding commitment to cancer control."

Congress, by joint resolution, requested the President to issue this proclamation as a way to focus continued attention on the problem of cancer.

Emphasis will be on the prevention of cancer, including environmental causes, as well as on the diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission, through its chronic hazards program, is screening and looking into possible regulatory action on chemical hazards in consumer products which may pose a risk of cancer.

PARENTS ALERTED TO ACCIDENTAL POISONINGS

As many as 100,000 young American children will be poisoned accidentally this year, the government is warning parents. And most of these poisonings will occur as a direct result of adult carelessness about household substances which are poisonous.

The warning came from the Consumer Product Safety Commission during National Poison Prevention Week, which was held this year from March 16th through the 22nd.

CPSC Chairman Susan King and Commissioner Jere E. Goyan of the Food and Drug Administration reminded parents that nearly all accidental poisonings to children under the age of five years can be prevented by keeping dangerous household products out of their reach. They urged parents to:

- **buy and use products with child-resistant caps and closures;**
- **keep products in their original containers with the warning labels intact; and**
- **make sure that drugs, cleaning products and other potentially hazardous substances are kept securely in cabinets and other locations inaccessible to children.**

Both CPSC and the FDA are members of the Poison Prevention Week Council which sponsors the annual publicity campaign. The Council consists of 28 professional and trade associations, health and safety organizations, youth-oriented service groups, and medical, dental, nursing and pharmaceutical organizations, as well as government agencies.

CPSC administers a Federal law (the Poison Prevention Packaging Act) which requires child-resistant packaging for certain types of narcotics and other dangerous drugs, drain cleaners and oven cleaners, lighter fluid, turpentine and a variety of solvents and other household products.

Until the previous decade, aspirin was the substance most commonly involved in poisonings to young children and was the first substance required to have child-resistant closures under the PPPA. Since the safety closures have been required, there has been a 76 per cent reduction in the number of deaths to young children who ingested aspirin, and a 60 per cent decrease in the actual number of ingestions. Overall, deaths from accidental poisonings to young children from all household products have been reduced by 56 per cent.

Most recently, poisonous household plants have been the cause of the greatest number of reports of child poisonings (as reported by poison control centers across the country). Detergents, cleaners and soaps ranked second, and vitamin/mineral preparations ranked third.

Parents commonly do not perceive some household liquids to be poisonous — such as furniture polish, liniments and paint thinner — resulting in careless storage of the containers. Special care should be taken to store these products out of the reach of young children and to purchase them only if they are equipped with child-resistant closures.

CPSC reminds parents and other consumers that child-resistant packaging can help save lives only if properly used.

Poison prevention safety tips include:

- closing the container properly after use to re-secure the safety feature;
- remembering that these safety features are no more than "child-resistant" — some young children may be able to open poison-prevention packages; and
- ensuring that the telephone numbers of the nearest poison control center, rescue squad service and physician are listed next to the telephone in the event of a poisoning.

SEARS WILL TRY AGAIN TO REPAIR FAN MOTORS

A concerted effort to have approximately 60,000 13-inch and 19-inch high velocity portable electric fans returned for free repair work will be made this spring by Sears, Roebuck and Co.

Vernco Division of Electric Company in Columbus, Ind., manufactured the fans, which could be a fire hazard.

According to the manufacturer, the motors on some of the models, all made in 1973 and 1974, may lock, causing the fan to overheat and the plastic components to ignite.

The recall was first announced in September 1978. A second attempt to reach owners was made in July 1979.

Vernco changed the fans in 1975 to eliminate the problem presented by the earlier models. Only 733 of the old fans, however, have been returned for repairs to Sears and the manufacturer. CPSC and Sears are concerned that consumers who may use the unrepaired fans in the coming warm weather months may face a potential fire hazard. Sears has cooperated with the Commission in the recall of the fans.

Sears' voluntary corrective action plan, approved by the Commission, calls for the retailer to run 4-inch by 4-inch free standing advertisements in newspapers in each of Sears' five regional territories. The advertisements announcing the recall of the Sears fans will be run four times on specified dates.

The fans sold by Sears are inscribed with the initials "SR" in the center of a plastic fan guard. They are light green in color and are mounted on a circular plastic base. The 13-inch models were sold for about $30 retail and the 19-inch models were retailed for about $50. The fans with the potential hazard are stamped on the bottom with a five digit code ending with the numerals "3" or "4" and with the Sears model numbers 758.80530 or 758.80550.

If, as a result of the newspaper advertisements, five per cent or more of the approximately 60,000 fans sold by Sears are returned for modifications, Sears will then run the same advertisements nationally in all of its major markets.

CPSC MAY SEEK SURVEY OF HOME ASBESTOS USE

Some toasters, popcorn poppers, dishwashers, electric frying pans, curling irons and electric blankets may contain asbestos.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, which has been studying this problem for the past six months, may soon ask manufacturers and importers in an industry-wide reporting requirement to provide information about asbestos in these products.

According to the Commission, consumer products containing asbestos fibers can pose a health hazard if the fibers are released into the air and are subsequently inhaled. Epidemiological studies linking asbestos with lung cancer were the reasons why CPSC earlier banned asbestos-containing patching compounds and artificial fireplace logs. Hair dryers have undergone a voluntary corrective action to remove asbestos heat shields.

In a joint advance notice of proposed rulemaking issued last October, CPSC and the Environmental Protection Agency announced that they would coordinate their regulatory responsibilities toward consumer product and commercial and industrial uses of asbestos.

Plans call for submittal to Commissioners for final approval of the general order directed to all manufacturers, importers and private labelers of 22 products thought to contain asbestos. CPSC will then submit the order to the General Accounting Office (GAO) for clearance under the Federal Reports Act.

Consumer products tentatively subject to the reporting requirement would include toasters, popcorn poppers, dishwashers, electric frying grills and pans, electric blankets, electric broilers and barbecue fire starters, deep fryers, electric mixers, ovens and ranges, curling irons, and portable electric heaters.

Also included would be texture paint, asbestos paper and millboard, high-temperature wallboard, iron rests and burner mats, high-temperature gaskets for wood and coal stoves, stovepipe rings, safes, kilns and incinerators.

Mary Morris, of CPSC's Health Sciences division, sits under an early model hair dryer discovered by a CPSC employee in his home basement. Tests by CPSC ascertained that the vintage model contained asbestos heat shields as did many recent hair dryers. Corrective actions by most manufacturers, approved by CPSC, have eliminated the use of asbestos in the heat shields of dryers now on the market.

Apart from the planned industry general order, CPSC intends to go forward with testing of consumer products to determine asbestos concentrations. Products which have been or may be tested include gummed asbestos tape and asbestos paper for insulating pipes, stem packing for faucets, asbestos burner pads on kitchen burners, wire gauze used to shield flasks on Bunsen burners, asbestos squares sometimes used in place of wire gauze, asbestos gloves, asbestos comtaminated vermiculite, high-temperature gaskets, asbestos millboard, ropepacking asbestos, corrugated asbestos paper, asbestos cement, asbestos furnace cement, pipe coverings, duct connectors, and some toasters.

WATER TOY *from page 1*

since December 1979 when the toys began to be produced with a water flow control valve to decrease and control the water flow. Such new editions are readily identifiable since they are equipped with a *blue* hose connector (the older design has a red connector) at the base of the clown head. The words "Important Notice" and "Safety Check List" also are imprinted on the new toy cartons.

Iris Hoffman, of CPSC's Office of Program Management, points to one of the containers pictured in the table top exhibit on the hazards of storing gasoline. The special exhibit was prepared by Sam Allen, chief of CPSC's graphics branch, for display by the Atlanta Area Office.

If the hose connector is red but contains a blue insert which is clearly visible, then it also has been corrected and is equipped with a water flow control valve.

To correct the potential hazard in "Fun Fountain" toys manufactured before December 1979, parents are urged to go to the place of purchase to receive a free water flow control valve insert, or they may contact Wham-O directly to receive a free valve insert (Customer Service Dept. 7, 835 East El Monte Street, San Gabriel, California, 91778). Consumers also may telephone Wham-O toll-free at 800/423-4174 (in California, call collect at 213/287-9681).

The water flow control valve snaps easily into the hose connector and once installed will remain firmly within the connector, according to the company.

Consumers wishing further information may call CPSC's toll-free Hotline at 800/638-8326; in Maryland, call 800/492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and *the Virgin Islands, 800/638-8333.*

FORMALDEHYDE GAS *from page 1*

exposed to doses of formaldehyde gas ranging from .03 parts per million (ppm) to 4.0 ppm for periods of time ranging from 90 seconds to five hours per day for four days. (The two studies, involving about 100 healthy men and women, were conducted several years ago in Denmark and West Germany independently from U.S. scientists and health experts.)

CPSC already has received more than 600 complaints from consumers living in homes insulated with UF foam, with reported symptoms ranging from eye and skin irritation to breathing difficulties, persistent nosebleeds and nausea. Independent air samplings conducted predominantly by state and local authorities reported formaldehyde gas levels ranging from less than .1 ppm up to 10 ppm and higher.

CPSC staff currently is working to prepare language for a warning label on UF foam installation contracts. The warning would alert homeowners to the potential problems which may arise from the installation of UF foam and exposure to formaldehyde gas.

Formaldehyde is not only a basic chemical building-block for products manufactured by a substantial number of U.S. industries, but also is a common gaseous byproduct of combustion (CH^2O) and, accordingly, is a common ingredient in urban air pollution.

Beginning this summer with UF foam insulation, the Commission will consider several approaches toward the regulation of formaldehyde gas, including the possibility of different limits for individual products, depending on such factors as the level of formaldehyde gas emitted from the product and the availability and cost of a substitute chemical in the product.

This summer CPSC staff and other federal experts expect to analyze the final results of a two-year cancer study of laboratory rats and mice exposed to varying doses of formaldehyde gas by inhalation being conducted by the Chemical Industry Institute of Toxicology. Preliminary results at the 18-month stage of the study showed that a high proportion of the laboratory rats (20 per cent) had developed a singular form of nasal cancer.

The Commission last month concluded its fourth and final regional public hearing on consumer exposure to formaldehyde, focusing on UF foam insulation complaints and testimony from industry representatives, scientists, health experts and local authorities. Testimony received since the hearings opened in Portland, Ore., last December also will be useful in assisting CPSC to develop its regulatory alternatives.

A "CPSC Alert Sheet" on formaldehyde in consumer products now is being prepared and should be available to the public by mid-April. Consumers wishing a copy of the Alert sheet should call the toll-free CPSC Hotline at the numbers listed below.*

Persons wishing to obtain a copy of the National Academy of Sciences' assessment of the health effects of formaldehyde should write to the Office of the Secretary, CPSC, Washington, D.C. 20207.

*Continental U.S.: 800-638-8326
In Maryland: 800-492-8363
In Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands: 800-638-8333

PRODUCT SAFETY, IT'S NO ACCIDENT.

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Washington, D.C. 20207

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MAY 1980

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

Doug Forslund of Dynafoam, Media, Pa., demonstrates the application of urea-formaldehyde foam insulation to a concrete block panel during technical workshop on formaldehyde conducted by CPSC in April.

HAZARDS STUDIED AT FORMALDEHYDE MEET

Delegates from eight foreign countries joined representatives from America's industrial and scientific communities at a technical workshop on formaldehyde last month sponsored by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The three-day workshop at the Gaithersburg, Md., campus of the National Bureau of Standards, produced an estimated 600 pages of testimony on the chemical properties of urea-formaldehyde resins, and the techniques of measuring formaldehyde concentrations in the home.

The 145 persons attending heard presentations from 35 speakers on the release of formaldehyde from wood products and urea-formaldehyde foam insulation. Emphasized were the importance of proper installation in minimizing formaldehyde exposure, the reliability of measurement techniques used to determine formaldehyde concentrations in the air, and the chemical techniques and processes employed by manufacturers to alleviate the formaldehyde problems.

While there are some unanswered questions delegates said the workshop raised many issues important to solving problems involving formaldehyde. Among the issues spotlighted were:

1. Factors that should be considered by installers before proceeding with the manufacture of urea-formaldehyde foam insulation on site;

continued page 2

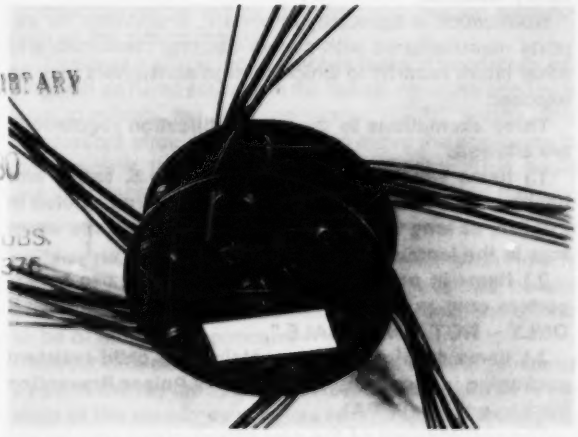
NEW EXPORT POLICY ANNOUNCED BY CPSC

Exporters of products declared unsafe by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and not allowed on U.S. markets will now have to notify CPSC of their intent to export such products, as a result of regulations approved in April by the Commission.

In addition, they must tell CPSC certain details of the exports -- most importantly, the identity of the firm which will receive these products in the importing country.

Under the terms of the new policy, all U.S. exporters of the hazardous products must notify CPSC at least 30 days before they expect to ship the products; during this time CPSC will inform the recipient foreign government of the shipment and also provide the name of the consignee. Officials of the receiving country may then make an informed judgment as to whether to permit entry of these goods which do not comply with CPSC safety and health standards.

continued page 2



Rotary paint strippers, similar to the one pictured above, have been involved in serious injuries to users when the wires have spun off during use.

PAINT STRIPPERS TO HAVE WARNING LABEL

A voluntary program to place a warning label on rotary paint strippers, which may cause serious injuries to users, is being carried out by the manufacturers and distributors of these products in cooperation with the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

CPSC staff is recommending that several manufacturers and distributors of rotary paint strippers affix labels to the unit, the packaging and the instructions which

continued page 2

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EXPORT POLICY *from page 1*

The export notification regulations apply not only to banned or non-complying consumer products (under the Consumer Product Safety Act) but also to fabric or upholstered furnishings which fail to comply with flammability standards (under the Flammable Fabrics Act) and substances which have been banned or fail to comply with labeling requirements (under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act).

Products which already have been marketed in the United States and which do not comply with CPSC standards may not be exported. These products which have been banned in the U.S. cannot be "dumped" by the manufacturers onto unaware foreign nations.

Some U.S. manufacturers, however, make products which have been ordered by foreign corporations and never were intended to be distributed or sold in U.S. commerce. Previously, these U.S. companies had been permitted to export their goods without notifying CPSC or the recipient nation.

Under the new CPSC export policy, a company which already exports bicycles lacking safety reflectors required by CPSC regulation, for example, may continue to do so only if the company complies with the specific notification requirements. It is then the responsibility of the importing country, once it has been informed by CPSC, either to prohibit entry of the non-complying products, to allow distribution of the products, or make arrangements with the exporting company to equip the product with safety features.

Notification is especially important, in addition, for exports manufactured with cancer-causing chemicals and other latent hazards to which foreign consumers may be exposed.

Three exemptions to the new notification regulations are allowed:

1.) Items which do not comply with U.S. safety and health regulations solely because they are not labeled in English, as long as they are labeled with requisite warnings in the language of the importing country.

2.) Items in non-compliance intended for use by exporters only as samples, and clearly labeled "SAMPLE ONLY -- NOT FOR RESALE."

3.) Items required to be contained in child-resistant packaging (under the terms of the U.S. Poison Prevention Packaging Act (PPPA).

The enforcement of the new export policy regulations will be the responsibility of CPSC's Associate Executive Director for Compliance and Enforcement, David Schmeltzer. Exporters must provide Schmeltzer with the following information:

- name, address and phone number of the exporter
- anticipated date of shipment
- the country and port of destination
- the quantity of goods to be shipped
- a description of the goods, including brand or model number or other identifying numbers
- description of how the goods fail to comply with CPSC safety regulations
- name and address of the consignee

To reduce the burden of paperwork on U.S. exporters, they need to provide only one notification per year for each series of shipments of goods bound for the same country.

FORMALDEHYDE MEET *from page 1*

2. The reliability of formaldehyde measurement techniques employed by government and industry; and

3. The effectiveness of techniques used to alleviate formaldehyde release problems in the environment.

In a discussion of the factors affecting the stability of urea-formaldehyde foam, Professor Graham Allan of the University of Washington at Seattle indicated there is some promise of solving the problem of formaldehyde gas release. He said he has conducted laboratory tests on several UF foam insulation products, and that one product incorporating the additive anisaldehyde showed that it may eliminate long-term formaldehyde release. Other additives have also been investigated. He said polyacrylamide may be another effective additive to control formaldehyde release from wood products and insulation.

PAINT STRIPPERS *from page 1*

would warn consumers of the hazard of pins flying off the strippers during use. The label would also recommend that consumers wear safety goggles, a face shield and protective clothing.

A paint stripper consists of a drum with metal wires extending from the circumference. The device attaches to a standard hand-held electric drill. The rotating action of the spinning wires serves to strip off old paint and rust.

CPSC has received approximately 150 consumer complaints about the rotary paint strippers -- which are widely advertised. Some consumers complained to CPSC that the wires break off and act like "flying shrapnel -- shooting in all directions."

One company employee who was injured in the eye while using a paint stripper placed the following message in his company's safety bulletin:

"FOR GOD'S SAKE, WEAR YOUR SAFETY GOGGLES ALL THE TIME ON THE JOB -- AND WHENEVER YOU'RE WORKING WITH TOOLS *OFF* THE JOB. IT'S UNBELIEVABLE HOW FAST THE PIECE OF WIRE WENT INTO MY EYE AND I HOPE NONE OF YOU WILL EVER KNOW THE AWFUL FEELING I HAD WHEN I KNEW THAT THING HAD GONE RIGHT IN."

CPSC is investigating the safety of rotary paint strippers, based on at least 12 injuries reported to the Commission in the past two years.

In a preliminary hazard assessment of eight firms which manufacture or distribute the strippers, CPSC staff has found what it considers to be a possible substantial product hazard based on the problem of the wires flying off during use.

The most serious type of injury reported to the agency involved penetration of an eye. Wire penetration was also reported to the face, neck, leg, hand, arm and knee.

CPSC staff believes that protective gear such as goggles, heavy gloves and protective clothing may reduce the likelihood of injury.

The number of rotary paint strippers distributed in commerce is estimated to be in the millions.

RECALLS

Consumers wishing to verify any model numbers of any recalls listed below may contact CPSC's toll-free Hotline at the following numbers: In the Continental U.S., dial 800/638-8326; in Maryland, 800/492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 800/638-8333.

HEAT GUNS

A program to repair approximately 20,000 "heat guns" used by model airplane hobbyists is being conducted by the manufacturer, Top Flite Models, Inc., of Chicago, Illinois. The heat guns, which contain asbestos heat shields in the barrel, emit asbestos fibers during use.

The repair program is being conducted voluntarily in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Hobbyists use the "T/F Monokote" brand heat guns to shrink and mold the outer covering of model airplanes. Although the product resembles and functions like a hand-held hair dryer, it cannot be used to dry hair because the gun emits air heated as high as 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Manufactured between June 1974 and December 1977, the heat guns have been sold nationwide in hobby shops and other specialty retail stores for approximately $23 each. The manufacturer has used heat shields made from the mineral "mica" in all of its heat guns produced since 1977.

Top Flite Models has agreed to replace the asbestos heat shields with mica liners at no cost to consumers. In order to receive free repairs, consumers should mail their heat guns to Top Flite Models, Inc., 1901 N. Narragansett Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60639. The firm will reimburse consumers for postage costs.

NIGHT LIGHTS

Approximately 55,000 plastic night lights that may pose a shock hazard to consumers are being recalled by their importer, Danara International, Ltd., of South Hackensack, New Jersey.

The recall is being conducted voluntarily in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The night lights were manufactured in a square shape with a white plastic cover depicting popular cartoon and nursery-rhyme characters. The cover can be rotated so that the picture can be turned to an upright position regardless of how the light is plugged into an electrical outlet.

Some of the lights were manufactured with insufficient amounts of glue, permitting the front cover to detach from the light assembly and thereby exposing the interior electrical wiring. No deaths or injuries, however, have been reported to the company or to CPSC.

The recalled lights bear the following inscription embossed on the orange plastic backing: "Danara International, Ltd., 1/4 watt, 115 volts."

An estimated 46,000 of the lights have been sold nationwide since March 1978 by Sears, Roebuck and Co. for $1.50 each. The Sears models feature a picture of Winnie the Pooh and Tigger. The remaining 9,000 lights feature other characters and were sold in a variety of retail outlets for approximately the same price.

Consumers should return the lights to the place of purchase for a full cash refund.

HAIR DRYERS/COMBS

CPSC has announced the recall of more than one-half million hair dryers and styling combs which were manufactured with asbestos. The recall includes professional hand-held hair dryers sold for use in barber shops and hair salons.

The recalls are being conducted voluntarily by the Andis Company, of Racine, Wisconsin, and by National Presto Industries, Inc., of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Under voluntary corrective programs approved by the Commission, the two firms have agreed to replace the asbestos linings in the dryers and stylers with non-asbestos materials.

The Andis Company is recalling tens of thousands of hand-held dryers sold to professional barbers and beauticians since 1973. Some salons may have resold the dryers directly to consumers, CPSC staff reports.

The recall applies to the following Andis hair dryer styles and models: Electro Dryer, model ED, Electro Dryer II, model ED2; Ultra 1200, model U-12; Elite 1500, model 480-EL; and Elite 1250, model E-12.

Professional hair stylists should return these dryers to the supply distributor where purchased for free repairs. Consumers who own one of the dryers can obtain the location of the nearest repair center by contacting Andis at its toll-free number 1-800-558-9441.

Hundreds of thousands of bonnet and hood-type hair dryers and styling combs are being recalled by National Presto Industries. These hair products were sold to consumers as early as 1965 through a variety of independent retail stores nationwide.

The following Presto brand dryers and stylers are eligible for free repairs: Elastic Bonnet, models LP04 and PP10A; Professional Hood, model PP18A; Mist Hood, models PP19A and PP19B; Styling Comb, model PP24A; and Mist Styling Comb, model PP25A.

Consumers should mail the dryers and stylers for free repairs to National Presto Industries, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 54701.

WRAP-UP OF CPSC AREA OFFICE NEWS

Two specially trained investigators from the **New York Area Office** have begun collecting air samples from homes insulated with urea formaldehyde foam. During the special survey, samples will be taken from 25 homes chosen from the information provided in complaints received by the Boston, Philadelphia and New York AOs. CPSC also is receiving results of air sampling analyses from many state and local agencies now performing these tests for their residents.

Two new **resident offices** have been opened in Orlando, Fla., and in Albuquerque, N. Mex. Each resident office is staffed by an investigator who, besides conducting compliance and hazard identification activities, will be working with the respective State and local governments, community organizations, groups and individual consumers.

The **San Francisco AO** is investigating a fatal accident in which an amusement ride similar to a roller coaster was involved. The preliminary report indicates that a stationary train at the passenger loading station was struck by a second train approaching the loading station.

Two serious, but unrelated, kite flying accidents are being investigated by the **Los Angeles AO.** In both instances, the kite flyers were using lengths of discarded string found in trash bins. Both lengths of the discarded string contained a metallic filament, which, when the strings contacted overhead power lines, conducted electricity to the kite flyers. Both victims received burn injuries and were hospitalized after the incidents.

CPSC's Area Offices in two locations have recently changed their addresses. Following are the new addresses for the Kansas City and San Francisco offices:

Kansas City
Midland Building, Suite 1000
1221 Baltimore Avenue
Kansas City, Missouri 64105

San Francisco
555 Battery Street
Room 416
San Francisco, CA 94111

WHERE TO GET HELP IF SOMEONE'S POISONED

Where would you turn for help if a youngster in your family swallowed a poisonous product?

Thanks to the child-resistant safety caps found on medicines, prescription drugs and many household products, there have been substantial reductions in the number of children under five years of age accidentally poisoned each year. Aspirin poisonings in 1972 totaled 8,146 the year the regulation mandating child-resistant caps on aspirin products went into effect; in 1977, aspirin ingestions among children below five years of age dropped to 3,264, a 60 per cent decrease.

Reductions have also been reported by Poison Control Centers for other products which have caused childhood poisonings. In 1972, the centers reported 1,810 actual ingestions of controlled drugs, while only 999 were tabulated in 1977, a 45 per cent decline. Turpentine came under the safety packaging regulations in 1973 when 777 childhood poisonings were reported; in 1977, turpentine poisonings totaled 371, a 52 per cent decrease.

If ingestion or the suspicion of one occurs in your home, CPSC suggests that you immediately check the label of the product to determine the proper first aid treatment for that substance, or call the nearest Poison Control Center or the emergency room of the nearest hospital. Tell them the exact product that was swallowed so they may suggest the proper remedial action. Also, consumers may wish to call their family physician. (see addresses listed below)

Alabama: Dept. of Public Health, Montgomery, Ala. 36117 (**205-832-3184**) Poison Control Centers are located in Anniston, Auburn Birmingham, Dothan, Florence, Gadsden, Huntsville, Mobile, Opelika and Tuskegee.

Alaska: Dept. of Health & Social Services, Juneau, Alaska (**907-465-3100**) The Poison Control Center is located in Anchorage.

Arizona: College of Pharmacy, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721. Poison Control Centers are located in Douglas, Flagstaff, Ganado, Kingman, Nogales, Phoenix, Prescott, Tucson, Winslow and Yuma.

Arkansas: Dept. of Health, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201 (**501-661-2397**) Poison Control Centers are located in El Dorado, Fort Smith, Harrison, Helena, Little Rock, Osceola and Pine Bluff.

California: Dept. of Health, Sacramento, Calif. 95814 (**916-322-2300**) Poison Control Centers are located in Fresno, Los Angeles, Oakland, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, and San Jose.

Colorado: Dept. of Health, EMS Division, Denver, Colo. 80220 (**303-629-1123**) Poison Control Centers are located in Denver.

Connecticut: Univ. of Connecticut Health Center, Farmington, Conn. 06032 (**203-674-2782**) Poison Control Centers are located in Bridgeport, Danbury, Farmington, Middletown, New Haven, Norwalk and Waterbury.

Delaware: Poison Information Service, 501 W. 14th Street, Wilmington, Dela. 19899 (**302-655-3389**) The Poison Control Center is located in Wilmington.

District of Columbia: Children's Hospital National Medical Center, 111 Michigan Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20010 (**202-745-2000**) The Poison Control Center is locatsd in Washington, D.C.

Florida: Dept. of Health & Rehabilitative Services, Tallahassee, Fla. 32301 (**904-487-1566**). Poison Control Centers are located in Apalachicola, Bartow, Bradenton, Daytona Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, Fort Meyers, Ft. Walton Beach, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Key West, Lakeland, Leesburg, Melbourne, Miami, Naples, Ocala, Orlando, Panama City, Pensacola, Punta Gorda, Rockledge, St. Petersburg, Sarasota, Tallahassee, Tampa, Titusville, West Palm Beach and Winter Haven.

Georgia: Dept. of Human Resources, Atlanta, Ga. 30308 (**404-894-3068**) Poison Control Centers are located in Albany, Athens, Atlanta, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, Rome, Savannah, Thomasville, Valdosta and Waycross.

Hawaii: Dept. of Health, Honolulu, Hawaii 96801 (**808-531-7776**) The Poison Control Center is located in Honolulu.

Idaho: Dept. of Health & Welfare, Boise, Idaho 83701 (**800-632-8000**) Poison Control Centers are located in Boise, Idaho Falls and Pocatello.

Illinois: Division of Emergency Medical Services and Highway Safety, Springfield, Ill. 62761 (**217-785-2080**) Poison Control Centers are located in Chicago, Peoria and Springfield.

Indiana: State Board of Health, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206 (**317-633-0332**) Poison Control Centers are located in Anderson, Angola, Columbus, Crown Point, East Chicago, Elkhart, Evansville, Fort Wayne, Frankfort, Gary, Goshen, Hammond, Huntington, Indianapolis, Kendallville, Kokomo, Lafayette, LaGrange, LaPorte, Lebanon, Madison, Marion, Mishawaka, Muncie, Portland, Richmond, Shelbyville, South Bend, Terre Haute, Valparaiso and Vincennes.

Iowa: Dept. of Health, Des Moines, Iowa 50319 (**515-281-4964**) Poison Control Centers are located in Des Moines, Dubuque, Fort Dodge, Iowa City and Waterloo.

Kansas: Dept. of Health & Environment, Topeka, Kansas 66620 (**913-862-9360, ext. 542**) Poison Control Centers are located in Atchison, Dodge City, Emporia, Fort Riley, Fort Scott, Great Bend, Hays, Kansas City, Lawrence, Parsons, Salina, Topeka and Wichita.

Kentucky: Dept. for Human Resources, Frankfort, Ky. 40601 (**502-564-4935**) Poison Control Centers are located in Ashland, Berea, Fort Thomas, Lexington, Louisville, Murray, Owensboro, Paducah and Prestonburg.

Louisiana: Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, Baton Rouge, La. 70801 (**504-342-2600**) Poison Control Centers are located in Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Monroe, New Orleans and Shreveport.

Maine: Maine Poison Control Center, Portland, Me. 04102 (**800-442-6305**) The Poison Control Center is located in Portland.

Maryland: Maryland Poison Information Center, School of Pharmacy, University of Maryland, Baltimore, Md. 21201 (**301-528-7604**) Poison Control Centers are located in Baltimore and Cumberland.

Massachusetts: Dept. of Public Health, Boston, Mass. 02111 (**800-682-9211**). The Poison Control Center is located in Boston.

Michigan: Division of Emergency Medical Services, Lansing, Mich. 48909 (**517-373-1406**) Poison Control Centers are located in Adrian, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Bay City, Berrien Center, Coldwater, Detroit, Eloise, Flint, Grand Rapids, Hancock, Holland, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Marquette, Midland, Petoskey, Pontiac, Port Huron, Saginaw and Traverse City.

Minnesota: Dept. of Health, Minneapolis, Minn. 55415 (**612-296-5278**) Poison Control Centers are located in Bemidji, Brainerd, Crookston, Duluth, Edina, Fergus Falls, Fridley, Mankato, Marshall, Minneapolis, Morris, Rochester, St. Cloud, St. Paul, Willmar and Worthington.

Mississippi: State Board of Health, Jackson, Miss. 39205 (**601-354-6650**) Poison Control Centers are located in Biloxi, Brandon, Columbia, Greenwood, Hattiesburg, Jackson, Laurel, Meridian, Pascagoula, University and Vicksburg.

Missouri: Division of Health, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102 (**314-751-2713**) Poison Control Centers are located in Cape Girardeau, Columbia, Hannibal, Jefferson City, Joplin, Kansas City, Kirksville, Poplar Bluff, Rolla, St. Joseph, St. Louis, Springfield and West Plains.

Montana: Dept. of Health & Environmental Science, Helena, Mont. 59601 (**800-525-5042**)

Nebraska: Dept. of Health, Lincoln, Neb. 68502 (**402-471-2122**) The Poison Control Center is located in Omaha.

Nevada: Dept. of Human Resources, Carson City, Nevada 87910 (**702-885-4750**) Poison Control Centers are located in Las Vegas and Reno.

New Hampshire: New Hampshire Poison Center, Hanover, N.H. 03755 (**603-843-4000**) The Poison Control Center is located in Hanover.

New Jersey: Dept. of Health, Trenton, N.J. 08625 (**609-292-5666**) Poison Control Centers are located in Atlantic City, Belleville, Boonton, Bridgeton, Camden, Denville, East Orange, Elizabeth, Englewood, Flemington, Livingston, Long Branch, Montclair, Mount Holly, Neptune, Newark, New Brunswick, Newton, Orange, Passaic, Perth Amboy, Phillipsburg, Point Pleasant, Princeton, Saddle Brook, Somerville, Summit, Teaneck, Trenton, Union and Wayne.

New Mexico: Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, N.M. 87131 (**800-432-6866**) The Poison Control Center is located in Albuquerque.

New York: Dept. of Health, Albany, N.Y. 12210 (**518-474-3664**) Poison Control Centers are located in Binghamton, Buffalo, Dunkirk, Elmira, East Meadow, Endicott, Glens Falls, Jamestown, Johnson City, Kingston, New York, Niagara Falls, Nyack, Rochester, Schenectady, Syracuse and Watertown.

North Carolina: Duke Univ. Medical Center, Durham, N.C. 27710 (**919-684-8111**) Poison Control Centers are located in Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, Hendersonville, Hickory, Jacksonville and Wilmington.

Pennsylvania: Dept. of Health, Harrisburg, Pa. 17120 (**717-787-2307**) Poison Control Centers are located in Allentown, Altoona, Bethlehem, Bloomsburg, Bradford, Bryn Mawr, Chambersburg, Chester, Clearfield, Coaldale, Coudersport, Danville, Doylestown, Drexel Hill, East Stroudsburg, Easton, Erie, Gettysburg, Greensburg, Hanover, Harrisburg, Hershey, Jeanette, Jersey Shore, Johnstown, Lancaster, Lansdale, Lebanon, Lehighton, Lewistown, Muncy, Nanticoke, Paoli, Philadelphia, Philipsburg, Pittsburgh, Pittston, Pottstown, Reading, Sayre, Sellersville, Somerset, State College, Titusville, Tunkhannock and York.

Puerto Rico: Univ. of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, P.R. (**809-765-4880**) Poison Control Centers are located in Arecibo, Fajardo, Mayaguez, Ponce and Rio Piedras.

Rhode Island: Dept. of Health, Providence, R.I. 02908 (**401-277-2401**) Poison Control Centers are located in Kingston, Pawtucket and Providence.

South Carolina: Dept. of Health & Environmental Control, Columbia, S.C. 29201 (**803-758-5625**) Poison Control Centers are located in Charleston and Columbia.

South Dakota: Dept. of Health, Pierre, S.D. 57501 (**605-773-3361**) Poison Control Centers are located in Rapid City and Sioux Falls.

Tennessee: Dept. of Public Health, Nashville, Tenn. 37219 (**615-741-2407**) Poison Control Centers are located in Chattanooga, Cookeville, Jackson, Johnson City, Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville.

Texas: Dept. of Health, Austin, Tx. 78756 (**512-458-7254**) Poison Control Centers are located in Abilene, Amarillo, Austin, Beaumont, Corpus Christi, El Paso, Fort Worth, Galveston, Grand Prairie, Harlingen, Laredo, Lubbock, Midland, Odessa, Plainview, San Angelo, San Antonio, Tyler, Waco and Wichita Falls.

Utah: Division of Health, Salt Lake City Utah 84113 (**801-533-6191**) The Poison Control Center is located in Salt Lake City.

Vermont: No Poison Control Centers

Virginia: Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, Richmond, Va. 23219 (**804-786-5188**) Poison Control Centers are located in Alexandria, Arlington, Blacksburg, Charlottesville, Danville, Falls Church, Hampton, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Lynchburg, Nassawdox, Norfolk, Petersburg, Portsmouth, Richmond, Roanoke, Staunton, Waynesboro and Williamsburg.

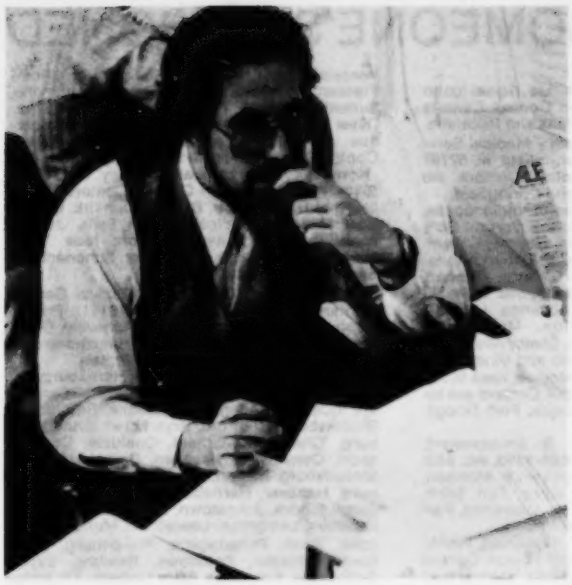
Virgin Islands: Dept. of Health, St. Thomas, V.I. 00801 (**809-774-1321, ext. 275**) Poison Control Centers are located in St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas.

Washington: Dept. of Social & Health Services, Seattle, Wash. 98105 (**206-633-0505**) Poison Control Centers are located in Aberdeen, Bellingham, Longview, Madigan, Olympia, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver and Yakima.

West Virginia: Dept. of Health, Charleston, W. Va. 25305 (**304-348-2971**) Poison Control Centers are located in Beckley, Belle, Charleston, Clarksburg, Huntington, Martinsburg, Morgantown, Parkersburg, Pt. Pleasant, Ronceverte, Weirton, Weston and Wheeling.

Wisconsin: Dept. of Health & Social Services, Division of Health, Madison, Wis. 53701 (**608-266-0923**) Poison Control Centers are located in Eau Claire, Green Bay, Lacrosse, Madison and Milwaukee.

Wyoming: Dept. of Health & Social Services, Cheyenne, Wyo. 82001 (**307-777-7955**) The Poison Control Center is located in Cheyenne.



Among CPSC personnel who fought to reduce the backlog of Hotline calls about aluminum wiring was Executive Director Richard A. Gross.

ALUMINUM WIRE CALLS FLOOD CPSC HOTLINE

In the first hour after a 10 p.m. April 3, 1980 ABC-TV news program last month citing the possible fire hazards of old technology aluminum wiring used in American homes, more than 20,000 consumers tried to call CPSC on the agency's toll-free Hotlines.

Hotline staffers were on duty and ready for the calls. Alerted by the network, they had watched the late evening national telecast of ABC's "20/20" program and were prepared to answer their phones which began ringing immediately. The staffers answered calls until 3 a.m. the following morning.

CPSC staff were unable to answer many of the more than 20,000 calls during those first hours, and the callers often heard a busy signal. Only 16 toll-free lines lead into CPSC's hotline service, so only 16 calls can be answered at any one time. Ken Giles, chief of the consumer services branch, said the telephone company reported that the flood of calls to the CPSC hotline caused mechanical blockages in the phone company's system on the East Coast.

The number of calls declined to about 5,000 a day by April 20, the phone company reported. CPSC's hotline staffers, assisted by volunteers from other CPSC divisions, receive and handle about 1,500 of these calls daily. They have been staffing the phones from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Fridays, and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to about 3 p.m.

Some of the more technical questions being asked by callers are being answered by CPSC's Bob Kelly, a licensed master electrician, and by staff engineers. Kelly is a retired District of Columbia Fire Department official. He reviews the information sheets prepared on each Hotline call at regular intervals each day. As time allows, he and others call individual consumers whose questions appear to be of immediate concern.

A new method for connecting aluminum wiring systems by permanently crimping short leads of copper wire to the ends of the aluminum wire has recently been developed. Under this method the copper lead is connected to the switches, receptacles, fixtures, or appliances in a normal fashion and a crimping method is used to connect the copper and aluminum wiring. In the view of the Commission's staff, this method of connection will reduce the fire hazard in the "old technology" aluminum-wired houses.

This method requires power-driven, high pressure tooling which should be operated by a specially trained electrical contractor. The tooling and information essential to this technology may not yet be available in many areas. At present, the Commission staff is aware of only one manufacturer who is marketing the tools and components for this type repair to the residential market. For further information regarding this type of repair, consumers may wish to write directly to the manufacturer - AMP Special Industries, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania 19482.

UTILITY BILL WARNING AVERTED HOME TRAGEDY

A U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission safety message in a gas company utility bill is credited with averting a possible tragedy to a Colorado family.

According to a report filed with the Public Service Company of Colorado, it was Easter Sunday morning when the housewife started dinner preparations. When she opened the cabinet beneath the gas range, she detected an odor and heard the hissing sound of escaping gas. The husband promptly shut down the master valve on the gas line and called the utility company. Repairs were made and no injuries or damages were sustained.

Source of the problem was a flexible gas connector which was the subject of a warning distributed by Public Service Company of Colorado to all its gas customers in March of this year. Having read of the warning, the housewife assumed that the hose connecting the range to the gas line was at fault. After the gas was turned off, the hose fell off at each end of the connector while she examined it.

CPSC's involvement dates back to the fall of 1979 when the agency joined with the American Gas Association to urge member gas firms throughout the nation to warn consumers about potential hazards of a flexible corrugated metal connector used to attach gas appliances to household gas lines. The safety warning noted that the connector hoses were in use at a number of gas leaks and fires, and suggested that consumers should have all such connectors inspected by plumbing and heating contractors or the gas company.

If there is a suspicion of any gas leaks, immediately extinguish all flame sources in the house, open the windows, and summon the gas company. CPSC warns that consumers should not attempt to move the appliance to determine if they have a faulty connector. This could actually cause an otherwise safe connection to fail.

ROLLER SKATE INJURIES UP IN NEW NEISS DATA

Roller skates are *IN* and skateboards are *OUT*.

The 1979 National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) figures have just been tabulated, and roller skate accidents have leaped ahead. Estimated skateboard injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms fell nearly half from 87,657 in 1978 to 45,652 in 1979.

During this same time, roller skating injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms skyrocketed from 93,835 in 1978 to 134,543 in 1979. Some of this increase may be a result of the improvements in the NEISS system.

This is just one example of the comparisons, contrasts, and observations that can be made from the NEISS hospital emergency room estimates for calendar year 1979, which have been prepared by the Directorate for Hazard Identification and Analysis.

This is the first complete year that injuries were reported using new product codes, and the NEISS redesign procedures were put into use. Some product codes were eliminated when seldom-used codes were combined under one number, while other codes were created when product groups were divided into more specific categories. Codes were added for new products.

Codes were also added to indicate the use of child-resistant closures or non-child-resistant closures in poisonings. In addition, there is a wider variety of codes to denote the location of accidents, whether in the home, school, sports or recreation area, or a number of other places.

In addition to the product codes changes, the NEISS redesign affects the national estimates in the following ways:

- NEISS hospitals have reported two product codes for all injuries associated with multiple products since January 1, 1978. Previously, only one product was coded and thus reflected in the data tables. This means that if, before 1978, a consumer dropped a match on clothing and was burned, only the clothing would have been coded; now the match would also be included. Two-code reporting will increase the overall injury estimates by perhaps five to seven percent, but will give a more accurate picture of which products are involved in accidental injuries.
- **The estimated number of injuries will also likely increase because the sample is now representative of hospitals from Alaska, Hawaii, and the U.S. territories, whereas the original NEISS sample was only representative of hospitals in the continental United States.**
- The overall quality of reporting should be improved since sample hospitals now each hire a person to work solely on reviewing patients' medical records and coding consumer product-related injuries into the NEISS teletypewriter for transmission to CPSC computers.
- **As another new feature in NEISS coding, the Commission has begun collecting injuries involving moving motor vehicles under an interagency agreement with the Department of Transportation.**
- **During 1979, the last of the original NEISS sample of hospital emergency rooms were dropped. By the end of the year, approximately 52 of the anticipated 74 new NEISS hospitals were reporting. Although the number of hospitals and the number of injury cases reported in the new sample is considerably less than in the old sample, the greater efficiency of the new sample design should result in the statistical precision remaining approximately the same.**

CPSC MEMO is published monthly by the Office of Communications, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent regulatory agency charged with reducing unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products. CPSC is headed by five Commissioners appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Commissioners are Susan B. King, Chairman; Sam Zagoria, Vice-Chairman; R. David Pittle; Edith Barksdale Sloan; and Stuart M. Statler. Use of funds for printing this publication through September 30, 1982, approved by the Office of the Management and Budget. **The CPSC Toll-free Hotline is 800-638-8326; in Maryland 800-492-8363.**

U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20207

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cpsc memo

JUNE 1980

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

FIRMS MUST REPORT HOME ASBESTOS USE

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has voted to issue a general order requiring approximately 1,200 U.S. corporations to provide information regarding the use of asbestos in consumer products.

This further step in CPSC's investigation into potential consumer exposure to asbestos, a known cause of cancer and lung disease, focuses on selected household appliances and other products which may be manufactured with asbestos.

Following publication of the general order in the *Federal Register*, the 1,200 manufacturers and importers will be allowed 60 days to provide the information focusing on about 30 categories of products the Commission selected for priority attention. These include kitchen appliances such as ovens and stoves, toasters, clothes washers and dryers, dishwashers and refrigerators. Also covered are such products as oven mitts and pot holders, portable electric heaters, pipe insulation, airduct insulation, and burner mats.

Responses to the order will be required from companies which have manufactured, imported or privately labeled these products since January 1, 1977. The information will assist CPSC in determining whether any actions are necessary to protect consumers from potential health risks associated with the products.

The questions in the general order will seek information covering:

- **whether asbestos has been used in the products**
- **the form in which the asbestos is present**
- **the purpose served by the asbestos**
- **the results of any tests performed to determine the emission of asbestos fibers into the air and**

continued page 2

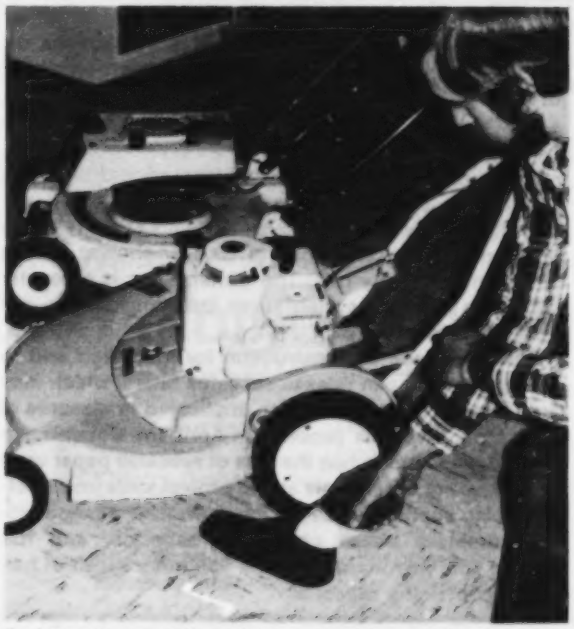
ENERGY SAVING HOMES POLLUTE INSIDE AIR?

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is investigating the possibility that indoor air pollution in tightly sealed, energy efficient homes may be causing adverse health effects.

In some instances, concentrations of certain pollutants inside the home are above those in the outside atmosphere. In an energy efficient home, the inside air may be replaced only once every five hours, as opposed to a one-hour total air replacement in homes not so tightly sealed.

A variety of pollutants--formaldehyde, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, asbestos, radon (which produces a radioactive gas)--can accumulate in higher proportions in

continued page 2



An integral part of the safety standard for walk-behind rotary power lawn mowers is the foot probe demonstrated here by CPSC mechanical engineer Tom R. Davis at the agency's Gaithersburg, Md., laboratory. Unless the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals rules otherwise, the standard is presently scheduled to take effect December 31, 1981.

FALL COURT RULING EXPECTED ON MOWERS

Some power lawn mower manufacturers have gone to court to stop the Consumer Product Safety Commission from enforcing its mandatory safety standard for walk-behind rotary mowers, which would apply to the 1982 models.

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans, La., will rule on the petition by the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) and certain mower manufacturers that

continued page 2

MOWER CHECKLIST AVAILABLE

How about a safety checklist to tell you how to do things right when you use a power lawn mower?

CPSC has just a checklist for you on things to do before you cut the grass, as you mow, and safety hints to reduce chances of a mishap while you operate the equipment.

For your copy to hang on the wall near your mower, write MOWER SAFETY CHECKLIST, Washington, D.C. 20207.

Y 3.C 76/3:

INDOOR POLLUTION *from page 1*

well-insulated homes. These pollutants can arise from many sources, including gas-fired appliances, tobacco smoke, building materials, and furnishings. Even aerosol sprays and household cleaners can release chemicals that can remain indoors.

The March/April issue of *Science 80* magazine states that the World Health Organization has "urged governments that reduce ventilation requirements in the spirit of energy conservation to be mindful of the impact on air quality." It also recommended further restrictions on public smoking and said building materials containing formaldehyde and radon should be avoided.

CPSC is currently investigating the effects of formaldehyde gas, which can be released from urea formaldehyde foam insulation (UFFI), plywood, particle board, and from combustion sources, such as gas appliances, fireplaces, and heating stoves. Formaldehyde causes a variety of irritating and allergic reactions and has been shown to cause cancer in laboratory rats. The Commission is presently examining regulatory alternatives for formaldehyde-gas products, beginning with UFFI.

Asbestos, used in construction for insulation and to deaden sounds, can release asbestos fibers, which may be inhaled. Asbestos has been implicated in diseases of the lung and various cancers. In April, the Commission granted a petition to ban the sale of asbestos paper used to insulate hot water ducts and to protect walls from heat-producing appliances. CPSC has previously banned artificial fireplace ashes containing asbestos, and has worked with manufacturers in a voluntary recall of hair dryers containing asbestos.

Another pollutant, radon, is present in the soil and tap water, as well as masonry and concrete-based building materials. It can migrate into the home from and through the walls and foundations of the house. The radioactive particles of decaying radon can attach themselves to dust and be inhaled into the lungs. Indoor radon levels are particularly high in areas of the country where there are large deposits of radioactive materials.

Carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide are released during the use of gas appliances, such as ranges, space heaters, water heaters, furnaces, and dryers. Carbon monoxide, as well as other combustion products, can build up in the home from lighted fireplaces, especially when dampers are malfunctioning. Cigarette smoking produces a number of chemical pollutants, including carbon monoxide, benzopyrene, soot, and formaldehyde.

Repeated exposure of animals to low to moderate levels of carbon monoxide is believed to cause damage to the heart and brain. The Commission has used this information as a basis for proposing a regulation requiring unvented gas space heaters to be equipped with a device to help keep room carbon monoxide levels down.

Research is planned or underway to determine the magnitude of the pollution problem and possible remedies which will still allow energy savings in homes. Using a heat exchanger is one possible way to keep a home tightly sealed without increasing indoor pollutants. The Commission has not tested these products for efficiency or safety, but installed in windows like air conditioners, they are used in Scandinavia to bring fresh air indoors while blowing inside air out.

ASBESTOS ORDER *from page 1*

- **the availability of potential substitutes for asbestos in the products.**

In addition, the general order also seeks information as to the potential economic effects of regulating consumer products containing asbestos. According to law, the Commission must consider the probable effects on the cost and availability of a product before regulating the product. The Commission also must consider alternative approaches to a regulation that would achieve its objective while minimizing adverse effects on competition or on manufacturing.

The majority of the Commissioners approved inclusion of the following question to facilitate timely consideration of such potential economic effects:

"Describe the usual marketing and use patterns of each product identified, including: prices (e.g., price lists or schedules); promotional materials (to the extent that they relate to potential consumer uses); typical distribution channels (e.g., wholesale only, catalog sales only, wholesale and retail); regional distribution patterns (e.g., nationwide, Northwest only); and intended uses, functions, and applications."

Chairman Susan King and Commissioners Stuart Statler and Edith Sloan approved the final general order in all respects. Commissioners David Pittle and Sam Zagoria joined in approval of the general order except as to the above question requiring the submission of certain economic information. The opinion of Commissioner Zagoria is expressed in a separate statement available from the Office of the Secretary, CPSC; the opinion of Commissioner Pittle will be available later in the Office of the Secretary.

MOWER RULING *from page 1*

the safety standard for rotary mowers be set aside. They also asked the Court to delay the effective date of the standard beyond December 31, 1981.

OPEI contends that the government improperly mandated specific design standards, that the requirements of the standard are not supported by substantial evidence, that the staff's economic report was erroneous, and that there were procedural defects in the development of the standard. These allegations are contested by the Commission.

CPSC maintains that the hazards responsible for the greatest number of consumer injuries are addressed in the safety standard, and that the specifications mandated in the standard are amply supported and in the public's interest.

Commission personnel noted that some 19,700 consumers received hospital emergency room treatment in 1977 for hand injuries involving contact with the rotary blade. The agency contends that 60 per cent of all walk-behind blade contact injuries would be eliminated if the blade were designed to stop within three seconds of release of the blade control handle.

CPSC estimates that some 17 per cent of all foot-blade injuries will be reduced or eliminated by the foot probe specification. In 1977, at least 8,600 persons were treated in emergency rooms for foot injuries by mowers.

RECALLS

Consumers wishing to verify any model numbers of any recalls listed below may contact CPSC's toll-free Hotline at the following numbers: In the Continental U.S., dial 800/638-8326; in Maryland, 800/492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 800/638-8333.

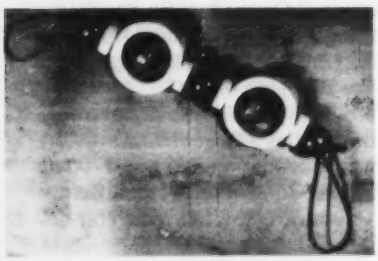
INFANT EXERCISER

Approximately 600 infant toys known as "crib exercisers" or "baby chains" are being recalled because they may pose a strangulation hazard to infants.

The recall is being conducted voluntarily by the toy's importer, Play Spaces International, of Waltham, Massachusetts, in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The toy consists of an elastic cord strung with 11 colored wooden rings and balls and is intended to be suspended over the infant after being strung across from one crib railing to the other.

CPSC staff believes, however, that parents mistakenly might position the toy close enough to enable the infant to become entangled in the elastic and thereby strangle. Parents also might place the toy in the crib with their child, according to CPSC staff. No injuries or deaths involving this toy have been reported to the firm or to CPSC.



This crib toy is being recalled because of a strangulation hazard.

The exercisers have been sold in retail stores nationwide for approximately $7.50 each. The toys are sold in plastic packages which are labeled "Schowanek" and "Made in West Germany." The package may be stamped with model number 10890.

Consumers should return the toys to the place of purchase for a full cash refund.

GARDEN SPRAYERS

More than 40,000 air-compression home and garden sprayers used to disperse pesticides and other chemicals are being recalled by their manufacturer because the product may explode or rupture during use.

The recall is being conducted voluntarily by D.B. Smith and Company, Inc., of Utica, N.Y., in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The sprayers are made of galvanized steel with a tank capacity ranging from 1.5 to 4.0 gallons. They are equipped with a hand-operated pump top to pressurize the tank and a metal spray nozzle attached to a rubber hose.

The firm has conveyed to CPSC 49 consumer complaints involving the sprayers, including reports of 43 injuries to consumers since April 1978.

The injuries reported include severe facial and dental injuries and broken arms and hands which were suffered when the sprayer bottom blew out, propelling the sprayer and its contents upward with explosive force.

The hazard was created by an improperly located weld on some sprayers which weakens the bottom, causing a rupture or explosion when the sprayer is pressurized.

continued on p. 4, col. 1

One of the variety of brand names of home and garden sprayers being recalled because they may explode.

TOY PLAY HOUSES

Approximately 400,000 "Indoor Gym Houses" are being recalled by their manufacturer, Creative Playthings, because they may pose a strangulation hazard to young children. Creative Playthings is a division of CBS, Inc., of New York, N.Y.

The recall is being conducted voluntarily in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

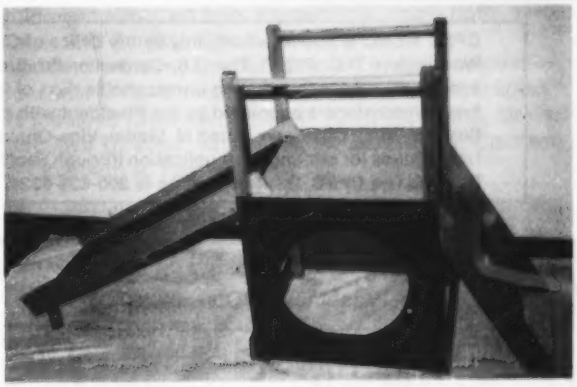
The gym houses consist of a hollow, masonite-and-wood box 30 inches in height which supports a two-step wooden ladder on one side and a short slide on the opposite side. The top of the box or "platform" serves as a bridge between the ladder and the slide and is protected on two sides by wooden railings.

The product is intended for use by children ages 18 months through 3 years old, according to the manufacturer. It was designed to include a space between the upper rung of the ladder and the platform, which is small enough to enable children to trap their heads and potentially strangle or asphyxiate.

CPSC staff has been informed of two incidents since October 1979, in which young children entrapped their heads in the space as they sat facing the platform on the bottom rung of the ladder. One incident resulted in the strangulation of an 18-month-old baby girl. The other caused a 16-month-old boy to asphyxiate, resulting in irreversible brain damage.

The gym houses being recalled were manufactured from 1962 through 1979 and were sold nationwide in toy stores and other retail outlets for approximately $29 to $50. Models manufactured before 1977 were constructed with a 6-inch space between the ladder's top rung and the platform, and models made after 1977 included a 5-inch space.

The firm has redesigned all gym houses manufactured since January, 1980 with an expanded 7.5-inch distance between the platform and the upper rung of the ladder, greatly reducing the likelihood of head entrapment.



Approximately 400,000 "Indoor Gym Houses" are being recalled by their manufacturer because they may pose a strangulation hazard.

Consumers immediately should contact the company to exchange their gym houses for a newly designed model, free-of-charge, or to request a free repair kit which includes a new ladder and installation instructions.

To exchange the product for a new unit, write to Creative Playthings, 3500 Industrial Road, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17105.

To request the ladder replacement kit, write to Creative Playthings P.O. Box 306, Route 147, Herndon, Pennsylvania, 17830.

RECALLS

The potentially defective sprayers were manufactured from June 1977 to June 1978, and have been sold nationwide in hardware stores and other retail outlets for approximately $15 to $30. The manufacturer has instituted improved quality control measures to eliminate the problem in sprayers manufactured after June 1978.

The recalled sprayers have been sold under a variety of brand names and model numbers. These include:

- **"SMITH" sprayer models 19GP, 21GP, 25GP, 28GP, 40GP, 38GQ and 56GQ.**
- **"SERVISTAR" brand sprayer models 15049 and 15055.**
- **"PARCO" sprayer models F-4, F-7, F-10, F-12, MC-38 and MC-56.**
- **"STATE CHEMICAL" sprayer model 12-A.**
- **"METRA CHEM" 3-1/4 gallon sprayer (no model number).**

The sprayers must display one of the following date codes. In addition to a brand name and model number listed above, to be subject to the recall: B, BA, BC, S11, S12, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5 or R6.

The date codes are visibly etched into the side of the sprayer below the directions, "Fill to this line," and all model numbers can be found on the paper label affixed to the product. Other models made from stainless steel and polyethylene plastic are not being recalled.

Consumers who own one of the sprayers being recalled should not use it. Consumers should empty the contents; remove the strap, pump, and hose-and-nozzle assembly; and mail the metal canister for immediate free replacement to Mariner Manufacturing Company, Inc., P.O. Box 359, Chadwicks, New York, 13319, or return it to the place of purchase for handling. Consumers will be reimbursed for postage costs.

BICYCLES

Huffy Corporation, Dayton, Ohio has warned consumers that certain bicycles manufactured by Huffy may contain improper master link assemblies in the drive chain, which could cause the chain to separate. Separation of the chain could result in the rider falling or otherwise losing control of the bicycle, and in addition bicycles with coaster brakes will lose their braking power.

Such improper master link assemblies may be found on any bicycles, other than 5, 10 or 12-speed lightweight bicycles, manufactured by Huffy between April 15, 1980 and May 15, 1980. These bicycles are sold under the "Huffy", "All Pro", "J.C. Penney", "Open Road", "Coast King", "Westpoint", "Western Flyer", "Woolco", and "Performer" brand names. Bicycles manufactured by Huffy during this period can be identified by a code number beginning with the letter "C" and followed by five numbers in the range of 81060 to 81360, inclusive, which appears on the left rear axle plate of the bicycle (the left portion of the frame into which the rear wheel is bolted).

Huffy emphasizes that not all bicycles manufactured during this period have improper master link assemblies. Huffy discovered the improper master link assemblies in the course of internal audit procedures; no incidents of this condition have been reported by consumers, and Huffy believes that most bicycles manufactured during this period are still in retailers' hands.

Consumers who have a bicycle, other than a 5, 10 or 12 speed lightweight bicycle, purchased after April 15, 1980 and bearing a code number beginning with the letter "C" and followed by five numbers in the range of 81060 to 81360, inclusive, are urged to:

1. **Cease use of the bicycle**
2. **Take the bicycle to an authorized Huffy service center for free inspection and, if necessary, replacement of the master link assembly. For information as to the location of the Huffy authorized service center nearest you, call Huffy collect at 513/866-7277.**

Bicycles bearing code numbers other than those listed above and all 5, 10 and 12 speed lightweight bicycles have proper master link assemblies and are not subject to this recall.

CORRECTION

Two things were wrong with the story on "Where To Get Help If Someone's Poisoned" in the May, 1980 issue of the *CPSC MEMO*.

A paragraph was dropped from the story because of space limitations. The deleted paragraph explained that readers should call their state coordinators to obtain the location and telephone number of their nearest Poison Control Center, and post it near the phone.

The story went on to list the telephone numbers of state coordinators. Without this paragraph, the reader may have incorrectly surmised that the number listed was the number to be called at the time of the emergency.

Also, the coordinators, phone numbers and cities where Poison Control Centers are located for four states were omitted. They are:

North Dakota: Department of Health, Bismarck 58505 **(701-224-2388)** Poison control centers are located in Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot and Williston.

Ohio: Department of Health, Columbus 43216 **(614-466-2544).** Poison control centers are located in Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Lorain, Mansfield, Springfield, Toledo, Youngstown and Zanesville.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma Poison Control Center, Oklahoma Children's Memorial Hospital, P.O. Box 26307 **(405-271-5454 or 800-522-4611)** Poison control centers are located in Ada, Ardmore, Lawton, McAlester, Oklahoma City, Ponca City and Tulsa.

Oregon: Oregon Poison Control & Drug Information Center, University of Oregon Health Sciences Center, 3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Road, Portland 97201 **(503-225-8500).**

Also, the correct number for the Department of Social and Health Services, Seattle, **Washington is (206)-522-7478.**

CPSC TO DECIDE ON CHAIN SAWS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is expected to decide in the near future what actions are necessary to reduce chain saw accidents.

Chain saw injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms increased from 29,000 injuries in 1976 to 53,000 in 1979. Kickback by the chain saw is estimated to have caused 23 per cent of these injuries.

During the past 18 months, the Chain Saw Manufacturers Association (CSMA) has cooperated with the Commission in an effort to develop a chain saw standard. However, the Commission staff has judged that the joint effort has not resulted in sufficient technical information to draft a standard. CSMA submitted a draft of requirements based on the work done during the 18 months, but the Commission staff judged the CSMA submission inadequate and CPSC has terminated the joint effort.

The CPSC staff recently pointed out that domestic chain saw manufacturers export saws to Sweden which meet mandatory standards required by Sweden since 1978. Safety features on saws sold in Sweden are often offered to U.S. customers as optional equipment or are found only on some models.

If manufacturers were to incorporate present safety devices on their saws, the cost would not be prohibitive. A chain brake, hand guard, and low kick bar and chain combination would add about $10 to the retail price.

AREA OFFICE NEWS

The **Kansas City** Area Office (AO) and 12 Pizza Hut restaurants in Wichita, Kan., sponsored an "Operation Bike Check" during the month of April. More than 550 youngsters were given copies of the CPSC's Sprocket Man pamphlet on bicycle safety, an illustrated comic-book style publication, when they brought their bicycles to one of the participating sites for a safety check.

The **Chicago** AO staff is assisting Chicago's Department of Consumer Services in the development of an energy conservation guide and a guide for general consumer buying.

Following the CPSC Awards Ceremony at the Kennedy Center on May 27, the awardees at the ceremony gather on stage for a group picture.

AWARDS GIVEN FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE

Three CPSC employees received the Chairman's Award May 27 at the Seventh Annual Awards Ceremony, Kennedy Center Terrace Theatre, Washington, D.C.

The three Chairman's awards were presented by Chairman Susan B. King to Linda Kiser, Director of Office of Congressional Relations, for outstanding work on Capitol Hill; Peter Preuss of Engineering and Sciences for his efforts in Chronic Hazards program; and Andrew Ulsamer of Engineering and Sciences for managing the CPSC and IRLG formaldehyde program.

Distinguished Service Awards were made to William Biggs, Resident Investigator, Phoenix, Arizona; and David Thome, Compliance Officer, Washington, D.C. The EEO Award was posthumously awarded to Joan Green Fuselier, Director of the Los Angeles Area Office, who was killed in an airplane accident in May 1979.

Two state awards were announced:

State of Connecticut - Mary Heslin - Commissioner of Consumer Protection

and

State of Wisconsin - Mary K. Ryan on behalf of the State of Wisconsin

Meritorious Awards were made to:

Roxanne Ando
Pearl S. Barnes
Sharon Beall
Victoria R. Brown
Almeda Burchfield
Jaime Delgado
Gloria V. DeSeife
Dorothy Drago
Marvin Everhart
Rory Fausett
Kathryn Graham
Brenda Haight
Ann Hamann
Beatrice Harwood
Elizabeth Hendricks
Claire Innes
Susan Jackson
Barbara Jacobson
Steven Lemberg
Alfred Marozzi
Mario Matarazzo
Dennis McCoskrie
Ronald Medford
Mary Ann Melland
Sharon Morris
Rosemarie Nance
John Rabusch
Alvin Rosendorf
Milton J. Schulz
Alysia Taylor
Claude Tolbert
Virginia White

A Group Award was made to the Correspondence Unit which includes Carl Brill, Abigail Fritz, Hazel Roth, Irene Staver and Zoraida Villadiego.

Esther Peterson, Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs, was the keynote speaker. Other speakers included Chairman Susan B. King, Richard A. Gross, Executive Director, Andrew Krulwich, General Counsel, and Kenneth R. Rashid, AED/CO.

CPSC FILM RECEIVES AWARD

The CPSC film "Saved by the Bell" was selected to receive the CINE Golden Eagle Certificate "as evidence of its suitability to represent the United States and American cinematography in international film festivals and other events abroad." CINE is the Council on International Nontheatrical Events. The CPSC film was one of three Federal government films chosen for showing at international film festivals. The other two were produced by the Smithsonian Institution and International Communications Agency.

Chairman Susan B. King congratulates members of the correspondence unit who received a special Group Award for helping to answer the more than 212,000 letters annually from consumers to CPSC. From left are Zoraida Villadiego, Carl Brill, Hazel Roth, Irene Staver, Abigail Fritz and Chairman King.

HIA REORGANIZES TO COLLECT NEISS DATA

Direct management control of the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) hospitals is being transferred from the CPSC Area Offices to Headquarters.

At the same time, the Commission is performing fewer, yet more selective, in-depth investigations of product-related injuries. These changes are part of the May 5 reorganization by the Directorate of Hazard Identification and Analysis (HIA) of its Division of Injury Data Collection (HIEI). This Division provides the Commission's core injury data information.

Basically, this office was reorganized as the Division of Hazard and Injury Data Systems (HIEI) to form three teams, each team responsible for the management of a part of NEISS. These teams have responsibility for representing the Eastern, Mid-states, and Western areas of the country.

Each regional team will carry out the following tasks:

- **monitoring the collection of product-related injury data from the emergency rooms of participating NEISS hospitals in its region;**
- **assigning and monitoring cases selected for follow-up investigations on targeted product injuries; and**
- **managing the contracts with NEISS hospitals and private contractors engaged in perusing emergency room files for accidents involving consumer products and for teletyping this information to the Headquarter's computers.**

Before the reorganization, three HIA branches handled each of these functions separately.

A fourth or additional branch under HIEI will continue to handle non-NEISS injury-gathering sources, including death certificates, news clippings, consumer complaints, and coroner's reports (MECAP).

The management of the NEISS hospitals by Headquarters became possible when the hospital coordinators' scope of work was reduced. A continuing decline in the number of on-site follow-up investigations needed by the Commission has now reached a level where it is no longer feasible to have a hospital coordinator, or contractor, perform this work. Thus, the hospital coordinator's, or contractor's, responsibilities have been reduced to performing the "surveillance only" activity—a function that can be managed easily and efficiently from Headquarters.

The Area Offices, rather than the contractors, will now perform the on-site investigations needed. The goal is to convert the contracts to "surveillance only" by October 1, 1980. These changes will save the Commission several hundred thousand dollars and will simplify management of the NEISS hospitals.

ADVISORY APPLICATIONS SOUGHT

The Consumer Product Safety Commission is inviting applications and nominations for membership on three advisory committees for vacancies that will occur in July 1980. The advisory committees are: (1) the Product Safety Advisory Council, (2) the National Advisory Committee for the Flammable Fabrics Act, and (3) the Technical Advisory Committee on Poison Prevention Packaging. These appointments are for two-year terms.

Interested persons may obtain additional information by contacting Barbara Rosenfeld, Director, Office of Public Participation, on (202) 634-7700 or by writing to her, at the Consumer Product Safety Commission, 1111 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20207.

Deadline for application or nomination submission is July 11, 1980.

CPSC MEMO is published monthly by the Office of Communications, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent regulatory agency charged with reducing unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products. CPSC is headed by five Commissioners appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Commissioners are Susan B. King, Chairman; Stuart M. Statler, Vice-Chairman; R. David Pittle; Edith Barksdale Sloan; and Sam Zagoria. Use of funds for printing this publication through September 30, 1982, approved by the Office of the Management and Budget. **The CPSC Toll-free Hotline is 800-638-8326; in Maryland 800-492-8363.**

U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20207

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FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

LAWN MOWER STANDARD UPHELD BY U.S. COURT

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit has upheld the CPSC Safety Standard for Walk-Behind Power Lawn Mowers, except for one provision. The decision was handed down on June 19, 1980.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), which challenged the regulation, has not announced if it plans to appeal the decision; however, OPEI has asked CPSC for a 6 month extension of the effective date of the standard. The Commission staff is currently evaluating this request.

The regulation, which applies to walk-behind mowers made after December 1981, will require rotary mowers to include a device to stop the rotation of the blade within 3 seconds after the operator's hands leave the normal position on the handle.

Rotary mowers must also have shielding to prevent foot contact with the blade at the rear of the mower, and both rotary and reel-type mowers will bear a warning label. The Court, however, did not accept a requirement that rotary mowers pass a test to reduce the likelihood that users could be injured by foot contact with the blade at the discharge chute of the mower.

The standard is expected to prevent nearly 60,000 blade contact injuries a year. The safety requirements are ex-

continued page 2

AMUSEMENT RIDES TOP CPSC JUNE ACTIONS

The Consumer Product Safety Commission acted on a wide range of petitions and one staff "Emerging Hazards" proposal during June.

The Commission:

- **approved an "Emerging Hazards" plan to increase the safety of amusement rides,**
- **decided to propose an exemption for certain small, vertical-sided refuse bins from the ban on unstable bins,**
- **decided not to develop mandatory standards for high chairs and infant mesh furniture,**
- **decided against issuing mandatory standards for football helmets, and**
- **refused a request to issue a new flammability standard for disposable diapers, but did allow the uncovered plastic layer to be exempt from the testing requirements of the existing flammability standard.**

In the amusement ride action, the Commission noted that CPSC does not have the resources to develop a mandatory safety standard or to train special personnel to en-

continued page 2

The circled areas in this photograph show two areas where asbestos containing material could have fallen from the ceiling. The circle on the left shows scrape marks near an electrical conduit box. In the right circle, two holes have been drilled in the ceiling and were not filled in. The ceiling is in the office of Gale Wyer, Director of CPSC's Health Sciences Laboratories.

ASBESTOS FOUND IN BETHESDA CPSC HDQ.

CPSC health scientists have determined late in June that most of the ceilings of the offices occupied by approximately 615 CPSC employees in the agency's Bethesda headquarters were treated in 1968 with a textured surface material containing asbestos.

During repairs or renovations in recent years that material may have been disturbed to the extent that asbestos fibers may have been released.

CPSC officials do not know whether any staff members have been exposed to a health risk because of the presence of this material on the office ceilings. As a precaution, however, agency officials have consulted with CPSC health professionals and asbestos experts outside the agency to determine the best response.

On the basis of their recommendations, CPSC Executive Director directed that the following actions be taken:

- All CPSC offices in the Bethesda headquarters (known as Westwood Towers) were to be cleaned using special vacuuming equipment to remove any asbestos fibers which may have fallen from the ceilings. The work was to be performed by a professional contractor as expeditiously as possible and with a minimal disruption of staff activities in the offices, according to a cleaning schedule to be announced late in June.
- **CPSC promptly was to undertake inspections of all other facilities at 19 locations nationwide**

continued page 2

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LAWN MOWER DECISION *from page 1*

pected to increase the price of an average rotary mower by about $35, but this should be more than offset by the reduction in injury costs.

According to Harleigh Ewell of the CPSC Office of General Counsel, the principal CPSC attorney who drafted the preamble to the regulation and the brief for the Court, the legal principles announced by the Court will provide valuable guidance in future rulemaking proceedings.

JUNE ACTIONS *from page 1*

force such a standard (e.g. carry out investigations of the nation's thousands of fairs, carnivals, and amusement parks). However, the Commission approved a plan based on an amusement ride pilot program.

The Commission directed that CPSC:

1. **establish an information exchange program with the states to notify states of any possible safety problems with amusement rides,**
2. **continue monitoring voluntary standards activities by the amusement ride industry,**
3. **continue Section 15 activities, and**
4. **continue gathering data on amusement ride injuries.**

During 1979, CPSC estimates 6,700 injuries associated with amusement rides were treated in hospital emergency rooms. Between 1973 and 1978, there were 32 deaths in amusement ride accidents.

In one incident, three persons were killed and another seriously injured when a cable car disengaged from the cable and fell. Other deaths and injuries have occurred on ferris wheels and other rides.

The Commission voted 4-1 to grant the petition from the Greater Los Angeles Solid Waste Management Association to exempt certain small, vertical-sided refuse bins from the ban on unstable bins. The reasons for the decision, primarily based on a relatively low risk of injury, was to be expressed in a notice proposing the exemption.

The Commission denied a petition to regulate high chairs and infant mesh furniture, because, at this time, it does not believe these products, as a category, present an unreasonable risk of injury to children. The dangers cited in the petition included falls from unstable high chairs, strangulation from the entanglement of clothing in the mesh sides of playpens and portable cribs, and strangulation on a high chair tray or a loose restraint belt.

The decision was based, in part, on the existence of voluntary standards, which have been in effect since 1975 for high chairs and since 1977 for playpens. The staff is working on an evaluation of the voluntary standards expected to be completed in Fiscal Year 1981.

The Commission voted to deny a petition to establish mandatory safety standards for standard football helmets. The part of the petition requesting a mandatory standard for football shoes was denied in 1978.

The petitioner had contended that commonly marketed football helmets do not absorb or dissipate enough impact energy to remove the risk of serious head, neck and spinal injuries. However, CPSC staff cited voluntary safety improvements by football organizations as helping to reduce the risk of head injury.

In a related action, the Commission agreed to discuss at a later time whether to amend a Fiscal Year 1981 project on juvenile sports equipment, or establish a new project, to focus on children's football helmets not designed for competitive play.

In another action, the Commission decided to deny a petition to either ban or establish special labeling requirements for products containing hydrofluoric acid. The Commission, instead, directed the staff to issue revised labeling guidelines for products containing hydrofluoric acid under authority of the Federal Hazardous Substances Act. This decision was based on information provided by the Toxicological Advisory Board.

ASBESTOS IN CEILINGS *from page 1*

where CPSC staff members are employed, and the appropriate protective measures were to be taken, if necessary.

- All ceilings were to be inspected to ensure that they are in stable condition precluding release of asbestos fibers. The best available information suggests that the textured material should be left intact if it is in good condition; removing it or attempting to seal it by any known process may lead to fiber release.
- **CPSC will initiate air sampling in the Bethesda headquarters to make certain that the above steps are effective.**
- Any future repairs or renovations in the Bethesda offices involving the ceiling material will be conducted only in the absence of CPSC staffers, who will return to their workspaces only after the offices again have been cleaned.

FIRMS SUE TO HALT CELLULOSE RULE

The Cellulose Manufacturers' Association and twenty-one cellulose insulation manufacturers have filed a lawsuit to enjoin the Consumer Product Safety Commission from further enforcement of the amended interim standard for cellulose insulation.

The lawsuit was filed in the District Court for the Western District of Washington on June 6, 1980. The suit also seeks to enjoin the Consumer Product Safety Commission from further enforcement of a provision of the certification rule, pending review of the standard and certification rule.

The plaintiffs have asked the court to review and set aside the test procedures of the standard for settled density; corrosiveness; critical radiant flux; and smoldering combustion, primarily because of the alleged lack of reproducibility of these tests.

As an alternative to setting aside the test methods, the plaintiffs have requested the court to remand the issues to the Commission for further consideration.

The plaintiffs have also requested the court to review and set aside a provision of the record-keeping section of the certification rule and have alleged that this section requires the disclosure of confidential and proprietary information and trade secrets.

SUMMER DIVING FUN CAN END IN TRAGEDY

If you try beating the heat by heading for the pool, the best way of surviving the summer is to make shallow surface dives, not the Olympic ones. And, if the pool is above ground, the best approach is no diving of any kind.

That's the way Dr. Albert Esch cautions people about pool and swim safety. As Medical Director for the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Dr. Esch has been crusading for improved diving safety in light of an estimated 1,000 crippling accidents which he believes occur each year to people in the course of dives into pools, ponds, lakes and rivers.

"Much of what we know about diving accidents comes from a study funded by the Commission and conducted by the University of Miami Medical School," Dr. Esch says. "They researched and investigated a total of 72 diving accidents which resulted in all persons becoming quadriplegics...namely, that they fractured the fifth cervical vertebrae which produced paralysis of all arms and legs." He said the Veterans Administration estimated that each quadriplegic victim would require the outlay of $1 million for wage loss and medical care over an average life span.

According to the Miami study and final report, the typical victim was a male in his early 20's who often was a first-time visitor to the pool. Beyond this, the man was a fair swimmer, was probably not on drugs or alcohol, and was doing some "show-off" diving when the accident occurred.

"The most common accident involved injury to the cervical spine, caused by the head striking the bottom of the pool," Dr. Esch continued. "Of all 72 accidents investigated, 57 victims had complete quadriplegia and paralysis of all arms and legs as a result of the fracture of the fifth and sixth levels of the spine."

Asked if there were such a thing as a "safe" dive, Dr. Esch said a dive from the side of a below-ground pool was probably safe, providing the dive were made in deep water. Under no conditions should a dive be made into an above-the-ground pool, he cautioned.

"Many, many disabling injuries result from dives made in water less than four feet deep," he said. "At depths like this, it wouldn't matter whether the underwater surface were mud or concrete; keep in mind that an average person is plunging into the water from a dive at the rate of four feet per second, and this is fracture speed according to all the tests and reports that I've read and seen."

According to Dr. Esch, any surface dive made in six to eight feet of water is probably safe, assuming the dive is made from the side of the pool and not from the customary three-meter diving board. If a dive were to be made off the board, he considers 8-10 feet the absolute minimum depth for safe diving.

"The less experienced you are at diving, the safer you may be," Dr. Esch concluded. "A perfect dive like the Olympic divers is a risk for anyone except the professional. On the other hand, if arms are making a big splash, and the legs are bent the wrong way, then the diver has lots of 'drag' slowing the descent under the water. In other words, the more sloppy the dive, the safer the dive seems to be."

SAFE MOWER OPERATION MAY REDUCE INJURIES

The greatest danger while mowing a lawn is from accidental contact with the rotating blade.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 64 per cent of all walk-behind mower injuries are caused by contacting the blade. This can occur when the operator is clearing the discharge chute of grass clippings while the blade is rotating.

Other blade-contact accidents occur when the operator adjusts the cutting height of the mower with the engine running and when the operator's foot slips under the mower housing.

Three per cent of all blade injuries result in amputations of the toes or fingers.

Fifteen per cent of blade-contact injuries produce fractures or dislocations. Seventy per cent result in lacerations.

CPSC estimates that there are more than 120,000 power lawn mower accidents each year. In 1979, reports submitted to CPSC by hospitals across the nation indicate that over 65,000 persons were treated in hospital emergency rooms for rotary lawn mower injuries.

CPSC offers these safety tips to reduce chances of a mower injury:

Before mowing: Pick up all debris (stones, wire, toys, etc.) on the lawn. Check for objects near shrubs, trees and fences. Adjust the cutting height of the mower at this time.

If the lawn is wet, wait until it dries. Make sure you know where any obstacles exist (pipes, etc.) on the lawn. Fill the gas tank before starting the mower.

While mowing: Never point the discharge chute at anyone. Shut the engine off when going over gravel, rocks or immovable objects. Mow forward as much as possible so you know where you're going. With a walk-behind mower, mow across the slope. With a riding mower, mow up and down the slope. Keep extension cords of electric mowers far away from the cutting path. Turn off the engine if you leave the machine -- even for a moment.

Periodic checking: Disconnect the ignition wire from the spark plug if you are doing maintenance on the mower. Keep the mower lubricated, the oil level checked, and the discharge chute cleaned after using the mower. Store gasoline in container made for gasoline storage and away from any ignition sources...remember, gasoline is an explosive and treat it accordingly.

Check yourself: Aside from wearing sturdy shoes, give your entire attention to the mowing job at hand. If you have to get the job done in a hurry, don't. Delay the mowing until you can do the job properly and without mental or emotional distractions. Have your wits with you when you use the equipment.

FILMS AND SLIDES AVAILABLE FOR USE

If you plan to schedule a meeting that highlights safety in the home or safety outdoors, CPSC may be able to help you.

Sound motion picture films and slide presentations on a host of consumer topics are available on free loan for such meetings. Return postage is provided by the government.

Among the subjects covered by CPSC films and slides are **fire hazards in the home, lawn mower safety, avoiding mishaps on stairs, tubs and with glass doors, toy safety,** and **safety packaging on medicines** and **toxic products around the home.**

For information on CPSC films and slide presentations, write "Catalogs", CPSC, 5401 Westbard Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20207. A pamphlet listing all Commission materials will be provided, enabling you to choose the appropriate film for your meeting.

Requests for specific CPSC films should be sent to Film Scheduling Center, Modern Talking Picture Service, 5000 Park Street North, St. Petersburg, Fla. 33709. All requests for CPSC films and slides should be sent at least a month prior to your scheduled meeting.

UF FOAM INSULATION LABELING PROPOSED

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has voted unanimously to propose a regulation requiring the disclosure of safety information for urea formaldehyde (UF) foam insulation. The disclosure would alert consumers that the product may release formaldehyde gas which can adversely affect their health.

Persons installing UF foam insulation will be required to include the safety information on all sales contracts for the product. The information must appear on the same contract page as the consumer's signature and must be provided to the consumer before the product is installed.

Following a 60-day period of public comment on the proposed safety notification, the Commission could approve a final rule as early as mid-October 1980, with the requirement becoming effective six weeks later.

The Commission's decision was based in part on accumulated evidence and testimony from health experts and consumers that the release of formaldehyde gas from UF foam insulation can cause people to experience a wide variety of adverse health effects. Exposure to formaldehyde gas may cause a variety of symptoms, including eye, nose and throat irritation; coughing and shortness of breath; skin irritation, nausea, dizziness and headaches. People with respiratory problems or allergies may suffer more serious reactions.

The Commission already has received more than 1,000 complaints from consumers who reported adverse health effects after UF foam insulation was installed in their homes. CPSC staff estimates that the level of complaints now reflects at least 2,500 people who have suffered symptoms of exposure to formaldehyde gas from UF foam insulation.

SAFETY INFORMATION

• THIS PRODUCT MAY RELEASE FORMALDEHYDE GAS INTO YOUR HOME OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME.

• FORMALDEHYDE GAS MAY CAUSE EYE, NOSE, AND THROAT IRRITATION, COUGHING, SHORTNESS OF BREATH, SKIN IRRITATION, NAUSEA, HEADACHES AND DIZZINESS. PEOPLE WITH RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS OR ALLERGIES MAY SUFFER MORE SERIOUS REACTIONS, ESPECIALLY PERSONS ALLERGIC TO FORMALDEHYDE.

• THE SYMPTOMS MAY APPEAR IMMEDIATELY, OR NOT UNTIL MONTHS AFTER INSTALLATION.

• USE OF THE INSULATION IN ATTICS, CEILINGS, AND INTERIOR WALLS INCREASES THE LIKELIHOOD OF RELEASING FORMALDEHYDE GAS INTO YOUR HOME. IN SOME INSTANCES THE FORMALDEHYDE GAS CANNOT BE CONTROLLED BY VENTILATION OR OTHER INEXPENSIVE MEANS.

• IF YOU HAVE HEALTH CONCERNS, CALL YOUR DOCTOR.

ALSO, CONTACT (INSTALLER-PHONE) OR (MATERIAL SUPPLIER-PHONE) IMMEDIATELY.

Shown above is the text of the notification language proposed for urea formaldehyde (UF) foam insulation.

NATIONAL NEWS...

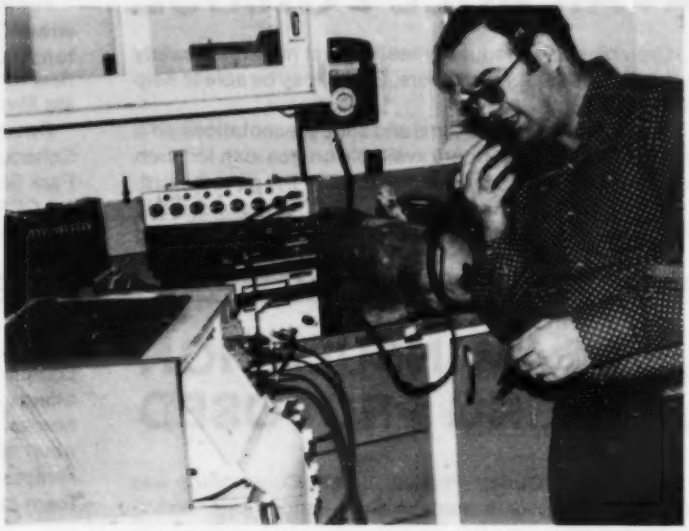
Nitropyrene -- a substance which has been used in copy machine carbon black toners -- has been called a potential carcinogen by University of Texas scientists. These scientists claim that the chemical can be hazardous to those who are heavily exposed over long periods of time. The head of the group, **Dr. Marvin Legator,** told the *Washington Post* that animal data are needed to determine whether there's a carcinogen problem.

A report prepared for the **Journal of the American Medical Association** cites CPSC hearings on the adverse health effects of formaldehyde. The report tells of CPSC concerns about the safety of urea formaldehyde foam insulation as well as formaldehyde in textiles, paper, cosmetics and wood products. **Henry Kubinski,** a medical doctor at the University of Wisconsin, states in the report that "...until proven otherwise, formaldehyde should be considered potentially carcinogenic for humans." Dr. Kubinski adds, however, "epidemiological and other studies should be initiated to resolve the question in an unequivocal manner."

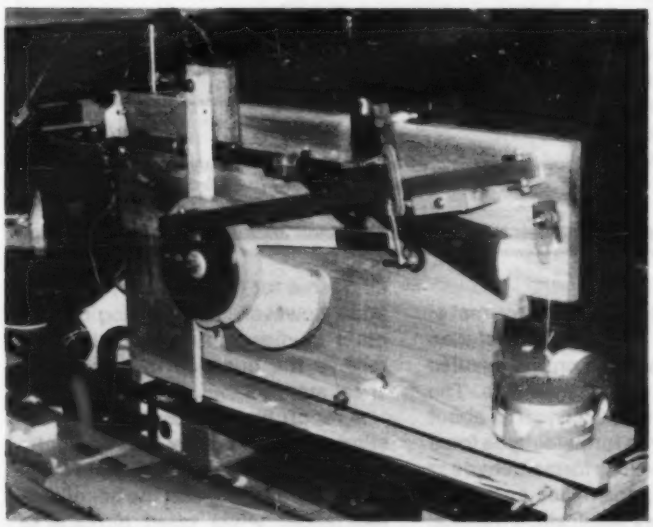
A report by the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** team recently was presented to a U.S. Senate committee concluding that the benefits of regulation, while often difficult to measure, still save thousands of lives and prevent "billions of dollars in damage a year to property and the environment.

CPSC LAB CONDUCTS SAFETY TESTS

The reflective tape on the rim of a bicycle tire is checked by Tom R. Davis, a mechanical engineer at CPSC's Engineering Testing Laboratory, to determine the effect of abrasions on the reflective properties of the tape. The tape would be permitted under amendments to the CPSC bicycle safety regulation now under consideration.



A pressure regulator device used on a scuba diving tank is tested by Henry Brisker, electrical engineer who designed the pressure measurement system for the Engineering Testing Laboratory. The test was designed to verify the adequacy of a change in design proposed by the manufacturer.



This ingenious mechanism was designed to test an air rifle to determine if the safety catch operated effectively. The testing device, designed and constructed by CPSC engineers, completed 10,000 firing cycles with the safety catch on. A photo electric sensor recorded when the gun fired.

Engineering technician Manuel Karos conducts a compliance test to determine if the sharp edges on a toy are within the requirements of the CPSC regulation on sharp edges.

AGENCY MOVES CLOSER TO CHAIN SAW RULE

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has voted to take the first steps toward eventual regulation of chain saws to reduce the hazard of "kickback," the largest single cause of injuries from chain saws every year.

By a unanimous vote in June, the Commission instructed its staff to prepare a public notice stating that work has begun on preparation of a mandatory safety standard for chain saws. The Commission also directed the staff to explore options for ensuring that safer chains are available in the marketplace as soon as possible both for new saws and when consumers purchase replacements chains for their saws. Consumers who regularly use their saws may need to replace the chain as often as twice a year.

In the absence of a CPSC safety standard, chain saw injuries which were serious enough to require hospital emergency room care have increased from 29,000 injuries in 1976 to 53,000 injuries in 1979. There were, however, an estimated total of 105,000 chain saw injuries that required medical attention in a hospital or elsewhere in 1979.

In order to expand CPSC's capabilities for collection of information regarding chain saw injuries, the staff is requesting any information from consumers concerning chain saw injuries they may have received or have knowledge of.

CPSC is interested in information pertaining to the type of injury as well as the nature of the incident (that is—whether the injury was due to chain saw kickback, loss of operator balance, as examples). Also requested are specific details of the saw involved in the accident—such as, the brand name and model of the saw, any safety devices the saw had (e.g., a hand guard, chain brake, nose guard) and the particular type of chain and guide bar the saw was equipped with.

This information will assist the Commission in evaluating the efficacy of various safety devices and provide direction for the development of Commission regulatory activities. Please mail any information you may have on chain saw injuries to:

Chain Saw Injuries
Directorate for HIA
Room 622-B
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
Washington, D.C. 20207

or telephone CPSC's Toll-free Hotline at 800-638-8326, in Maryland 800-492-8363.

CPSC ENDORSES BILL FOR SAFE CIGARETTE

In recent letters to Congress, the Consumer Product Safety Commission endorsed legislation introduced by Rep. Joe Moakley (D-Mass.) and Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) to require the Commission to develop a cigarette performance standard. Such a standard, the Commission feels, would reduce the risks of upholstered furniture and mattress fires ignited by cigarettes and little cigars.

CPSC stated that if a cigarette standard can be developed, it could help reduce the 1,300 home fire deaths caused annually by smoldering cigarettes. In its letter to House and Senate commerce committees, CPSC said, "Although we do not know whether a technically feasible and effective (cigarette) standard could be developed, the research effort should be pursued since it could reduce injuries, deaths and property damage from smoldering upholstered furniture and mattress fires."

Congress has previously prohibited CPSC from regulating cigarettes.

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AUG/SEPT
1980

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

ASBESTOS WORKSHOP HUNTS SUBSTITUTES

A workshop to collect information on substitutes for asbestos was held July 14-16 under the joint sponsorship of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Asbestos, a known cancer-causing agent, currently is used in several thousand industrial and commercial applications as well as products ranging from automobile brake linings to household appliances.

Since last October EPA and CPSC have been coordinating regulatory activities directed toward asbestos in the environment and consumer products. The purpose of the workshop was to gather technical and health-related data about alternate materials for asbestos in these products and applications.

As required by the Toxic Substances Control Act, EPA must consider, when regulating hazardous toxic materials, the availability of substitutes for substances which may pose an unreasonable health risk.

The Consumer Product Safety Act empowers CPSC to gather general information on products which may pose a significant health risk to consumers. The data will help the agencies determine the uses of asbestos, if any, which should be regulated.

The workshop was held at the Sheraton National Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. More than 1,000 persons registered for the workshop (about five times as many as first anticipated), representing industry, government, academia, labor, and environmental groups and other interests.

continued page 2

POOL DRAIN SUCTION MAY TRAP CHILDREN

The Consumer Product Safety Commission is investigating deaths and near drownings of children who have been trapped against or in water outlets of swimming pools, whirlpools, spa pools, and hot tubs.

Parts of their bodies or hair were trapped by the suction from the drain outlet.

One 9-year-old boy drowned in a spa-type whirlpool. He had dived to the bottom and stuck his arm into a broken plastic drain cover. The suction of the intake pipe was too strong for him to break loose.

An 8-year-old girl nearly drowned in an indoor whirlpool bath. She flung her long hair back, and it became entangled instantly in the recirculating inlet. She was saved when an adult rushed in and cut off her hair, after he was unable to pull her away from the suction.

continued page 2

The CPSC Testing Laboratory is currently testing actual furniture and mock-ups in order to evaluate the UFAC (Upholstered Furniture Action Council) Voluntary Action Program to reduce cigarette ignition of upholstered furniture. Lab technologist Gail Stafford classifies upholstery fabric in a mini-mockup to simulate actual conditions. A cigarette covered with a piece of sheeting material is burned in the crevice of the mini-mockup and the fabric is then classified based on the resulting char length.

GARAGE DOOR GAMES LEAD TO FATALITIES

Government safety investigators warn that children are playing a dangerous game with automatic garage doors—a game in which they activate the door's closing mechanism and then try to "beat the door" before it closes.

In the first five months of this year, there have been four confirmed deaths, two of which were young children believed to have been playing the *garage door game*.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has noted several in its detailed examinations into 37 automatic garage door accidents from 1972 to 1979. In one type of accident, an unsupervised child activates the automatic garage door control and tries to run outside before the door closes. The door pins the child to the ground and the child suffocates.

Another type of accident generally involves adults who sustain cuts from sharp garage door hardware while trying to repair the garage door mechanism.

CPSC says there are confirmed reports of 14 fatalities between 1970 and 1978. The agency estimates that some 750 consumers seek hospital emergency room attention each year for injuries sustained in connection with automatic garage door devices.

Children nine years of age and under are most often involved in automatic garage door injuries and deaths. Chil-

continued page 2

Y3.C76/3:

Exhibited at the National Workshop on Substitutes for Asbestos were a glove and mitten made of fire protection materials other than asbestos. Hugh L. Spitzer, project manager for the Chronic Chemical Hazard Program, wears the hand protectors.

ASBESTOS WORKSHOP *from page 1*

The first part of the workshop dealt with the technical and economic aspects of asbestos substitutes. The main part of this portion of the workshop consisted of work sessions on substitutes for the seven major categories of asbestos products. These were: friction products, gaskets and packing, plastics and flooring, textiles, sealants, substitutes for asbestos-cement sheet, and substitutes for asbestos-cement pipes.

The second portion of the workshop focused on the health effects of asbestos substitutes.

Participating in this workshop for the Commission were Dr. Peter Preuss, Deputy Associate Executive Director of Helath Sciences, Hugh Spitzer, Gale Wyer, Paul White, and Murray Cohn.

GARAGE DOOR *from page 1*

dren may go to great lengths to activate the closing mechanism. A 2-year-old Wisconsin youth is believed to have used a broom handle to trigger the door in an accident investigated by CPSC earlier this year. The boy fortunately survived even though he was unconscious when found.

While a number of options are being studied to eliminate possible hazards, the Commission is urging parents to take special precautions to minimize chances of a mishap or tragedy involving automatic garage doors.

1. Aside from prohibiting all "beat the garage door" games, parents should warn children of risks of intentionally or accidentally activating the automatic doors.

2. **Many garage door openers have an automatic reverse mechanism which stops or reverses the garage door upon impact with an object. This mechanism can usually be adjusted for sensitivity. Consult the owner's manual or dealer for instructions.**

3. Lubricate the garage door mechanism periodically to reduce friction in accordance with the owner's manual. The easier the door rolls on its track, the easier it is to adjust the control for maximum sensitivity.

4. **Homeowners should be aware of what to do in case of entrapment. Devices which contain automatic reverse mechanisms usually either stop or reverse the door when the control is pressed again. In addition, most garage door openers have a manual disconnect feature which enables the opener to be disconnected so that the door may be raised or lowered manually.**

5. Removal of manual pull ropes on the door is recommended because it eliminates another hazard for young children.

6. Relocating all operating switches out of the easy reach of children will make it difficult for youngsters to play with the devices.

7. Lock all cars containing the radio controls which activate the garage doors.

POOL DRAIN *from page 1*

As seen in the first case, accidents can occur when flat drain grates are broken or missing. Children playing around broken grates may have their hands or arms drawn into the drain throat where they are held, powerless to free themselves. If an arm or other body part is caught down a drain, an adult must be present to pull the child free or turn off the pump switch.

With a small, flat drain opening, there is the danger that a child's abdomen or other fleshy body part could be sucked against the drain outlet whose grate is missing or broken. If the whole body is suctioned onto a drain opening, the child can be freed by:
1) shutting off the pump switch immediately; or 2) placing your flattened hand between the person and the drain outlet to uncover part of the opening, thus breaking the suction.

Drain openings and suction jets sometimes have covers raised above the surface; in these cases, the water flow can carry a person's hair into the cover where it becomes entangled. Raised covers may be anti-vortex covers (which prevent the body from being dragged in), or covers supported by pins and with small openings on the side. One of these covers ensnared the 8-year-old's hair in the second case. Often, the person can only be freed by cutting the hair.

Consumers with pools, spas, whirlpools, and hot tubs should be aware of these hazards and take the following precautions:

1. Broken or missing drain covers should be replaced immediately. DO NOT USE A POOL OR OTHER EQUIPMENT WITH A MISSING OR BROKEN GRATE.
2. Do not allow children to use a pool, spa, or hot tub without supervision. Even adults should have someone within calling distance.
3. Warn children against playing around grates or other drain covers.
4. Look at your equipment. If you have a raised drain cover, wear long hair tightly pinned up or at least not flowing loosely.

WRAP-UP OF CPSC REGIONAL NEWS

The **San Francisco** Regional Office (RO) is investigating the drowning deaths of a woman and her two young children in a swimming pool that was partially covered by a floating solar-heating pool cover. There were no eyewitnesses to the accident. The investigating police theorize that one or both of the children swam under the cover and that the mother, in attempting to rescue the children, also swam under the cover but possibly became trapped or disoriented under the cover.

The **New York** RO reports that a cellulose insulation manufacturer recalled approximately 1,200 bags of cellulose insulation that did not comply with the standard for cellulose insulation. It was reported that the entire violative lot of the product was recovered successfully and that a recent sample shows the firm is now producing a complying product.

The **Chicago** RO staff assisted the Indiana Department of Public Welfare in training the licensers for day care centers to recognize certain hazards associated with playground equipment. They were taught to bring the hazard potentials to the attention of the day care center directors.

The **New York** RO provided educational materials to the New Jersey Center for Consumer Services. The materials were used in three summer workshops by approximately 1,000 home economics teachers.

Shown wearing full protective gear for skating is Larry Poploski, chief investigator for the Allegheny County Consumer Affairs Bureau.

Second and third grade winners in the poison prevention poster contest held in 12 San Francisco schools are shown here with their teachers and Dr. Mervyn Silverman, director of the San Francisco Health Department. The young winners are, left to right, Utuma Belfrey, Edwina Lou and Edwin Bondonza. Behind them are two teachers and a principal from their respective schools. The contest concluded a pilot poison prevention education project by the San Francisco Regional Poison Council. Some 1,500 second and third grade youngsters in 65 classrooms in the 12 schools participated. Students from the University of California School of Pharmacy assisted, conducting discussions of poison hazards and giving demonstrations of "dangerous lookalikes."

The **Philadelphia** RO sponsored a Summer Safety/Recreation Festival in Philadelphia. The festival provided displays and information from five Federal agencies (CPSC, FDA, USDA, DOT and DOE) and from several local agencies and organizations.

The **New York** RO reports that 40 county agents in New Jersey promoted lawn mower safety this summer through a County Cooperative Extension Urban 4-H Youth Development Program.

Ten employees of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment were commissioned recently as officers for CPSC. As commissioned officers, they will assist commission personnel in making product recall effectiveness checks, surveys on the recalled products and in taking product safety-related consumer complaints. The 10 newly commissioned officers are James A. Pyles, Roger E. Ozias, Janet Neff, David Blevins, George Shirk, George A. Mullin, Gerald Vornholt, John Zook, J.M. Dunn and Russell Park.

CPSC, FDA, and EPA investigators based in Dallas, Tex., attended a seminar on the laws and regulations administered by the five Federal agencies comprising the Interagency Regulatory Liaison Group (IRLG) - CPSC, FDA, EPA, OSHA and FSQS. The investigators of these agencies will, in the course of their respective agency inspection duties, note possible violations of regulations of other IRLG-member agencies. The suspected violations will be referred to the responsible agencies for further investigations.

The **Los Angeles** RO reported on two surveys conducted by Arizona State University marketing students. The students surveyed consumers in the metropolitan Phoenix area on the uses of alternate heating sources and energy-saving devices. The surveys, supervised by the Phoenix CPSC resident investigator, provided CPSC with information on consumer attitudes and use of a variety of products.

Youngsters in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, are likely to remember June as *Roller Skate Safety Month*.

The Allegheny County Commissioners, with the help of the **Philadelphia** RO promoted numerous programs on roller skating safety during the month.

Following a June 10 kick-off ceremony, skating demonstrations showed techniques of both skating and falling. Local radio and TV stations carried pertinent safety messages for skaters and conducted interviews with CPSC personnel and staff members of the Allegheny County Bureau of Consumer Affairs.

A special radio program was presented on WDVQ (Duquesne University) offering roller skate safety information for the handicapped.

Safety demonstrations were conducted for special groups, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and skaters from the YMCA, the YWCA, and many county schools.

RECALLS

Consumers wishing to verify any model numbers of any recalls listed below may contact CPSC's toll-free Hotline at the following numbers: In the Continental U.S., dial 800/638-8326; in Maryland, 800/492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 800/638-8333.

SPEAR GUNS

Following a very low rate of consumer return of potentially hazardous aquatic spear guns, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and AMF Voit, Inc., are repeating public warning of the hazard and urging consumers to participate in a free repair program.

Only one per cent (986) of the estimated 97,300 potentially hazardous spear guns have been returned to the manufacturer for free repairs since the recall was announced more than a year ago. These spear guns may contain defective triggers and as a result may fire accidentally even though their safety catches are engaged.

Although AMF Voit has received 13 consumer complaints about this malfunction, neither CPSC nor the company has received any reports of deaths or serious injuries.

The "carbine" spear guns being recalled were sold nationwide in specialty stores from 1967 to 1979 under the AMF Voit, Inc. label. The company's name can be found on the left side of the grip of the two models being recalled. One of the recalled models may be identified by a 17-inch aluminum barrel while the other features a 26-inch aluminum barrel. Both models have black plastic handles.

Spear guns models G-6 and G-7, manufactured since May 1979, are not being recalled and are easily identified if a serial number is affixed to the handle or barrel. Any gun which is equipped with a serial number is not involved in the recall.

Sears, Roebuck and Company also marketed 1,400 of the spear guns under its private label between 1970 and 1973. These models may be identified by a 17-inch aluminum barrel and the model number 436.573140 displayed along with the Sears name on the left side of an orange-colored plastic hand grip.

Consumers who own the AMF or Sears models should disassemble the unloaded spear gun handle assembly (which includes the grip and the trigger) from the gun barrel by removing the screw holding the two parts together.

To obtain free replacement parts, the gun handle and the shaft of the spear should be mailed to the nearest AMF Voit outlet listed below. All postage costs will be reimbursed fully; parts should be mailed by insured fourth-class parcel post, with a return receipt requested. Consumers should NOT return the gun barrel, the spear point or the shock lines.

AMF Voit centers accepting parts for replacement are:

AMF VOIT, INC.
3801 S. Harbor Blvd.
Santa Ana, CA 92704
714/546-4220

AMF VOIT, INC.
2601 Lively Blvd.
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
312/595-7370

AMF VOIT, INC
29 Essex Street
Maywood, NJ 07607
201/343-2450

AMF VOIT, INC.
71 Dawson Road
Guelph, Ontario, Canada
519/822-1576

Although Sears has received no consumer complaints, Sears stores nationwide will accept returns of the Sears' labelled model for modification by AMF Voit.

MITER SAWS

A program to repair approximately 55,000 "Craftsman Motorized Miter Saws" which may pose a laceration hazard to consumers is being conducted by Sears, Roebuck & Company.

Sears is conducting the program voluntarily in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The saws can accommodate several types of blades, including a carbide-tipped blade often used to cut soft metals. Because a carbide-tipped blade is thicker than the original blade provided with the saw, consumers may improperly fasten the carbide blade to the motor shaft, creating the possibility that the saw blade may spin off the saw while in use.

CPSC has been informed of three instances in 1980 in which carbide-tipped blades being used on the saws disengaged while still spinning. One incident resulted in severe facial lacerations to the consumer. No injuries were reported in the other two cases.

The repair program applies to the model 315.23730 and the 315.23731 "Craftsman Motorized Miter Saws." The model numbers can be found on a plate on the saw motor.

The saws have been sold by Sears nationwide from July 1978, through June 1980, for approximately $200.

Consumers immediately should stop using carbide-tipped blades with these saws.

To obtain a free repair kit, complete with installation instructions, consumers should contact their local Sears retail store or call toll-free 800-845-4781.

COMMISSION URGES CORRECT GAS CAN USAGE

The Commission, in July, directed CPSC staff to monitor the drafting of a voluntary standard for gas cans being developed by the American Society for Testing and Materials. The main problem with gas cans, it was agreed, was not how they are built but how they are used. Commission statistics show that 1,600 people received emergency room treatment in 1978 for burns associated with gasoline storage containers, but a sample showed only 13 percent of the containers were sold specifically for handling gasoline.

ASBESTOS CLEANED FROM CPSC OFFICES

All CPSC floors were thoroughly cleaned by July 4 following the discovery of asbestos in the ceilings of CPSC's Westwood Towers Building.

A private contractor cleaned in the evenings and over the weekends. No employee work time was lost.

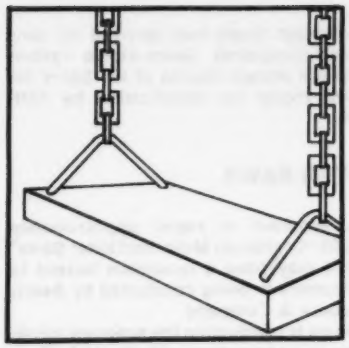
The contractor used high-filtration vacuums that contained a series of different filters. Ordinary vacuums would have stirred up the asbestos in the air and allowed some to fly back out of the vacuum.

The special machinery sealed the asbestos in and allowed it all to be disposed of properly. The contractors, wearing respirators, moved all the furniture in the offices to reach every spot and completely sealed off each working area.

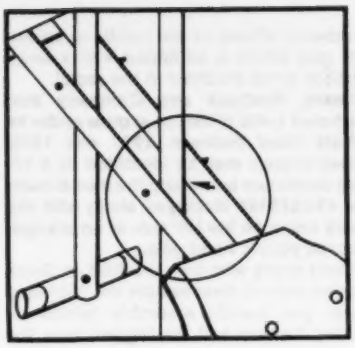
Although the contractor tested air samples before, during, and after the cleaning, the Commission also was testing samples independently. Preliminary results from air tested before the special vacuuming started indicates no airborne asbestos particles were present. Further air sampling was being done, and samples will be taken again in six weeks.

Employees in Westwood Towers were reminded that the ceilings should not be damaged or abraded in any way.

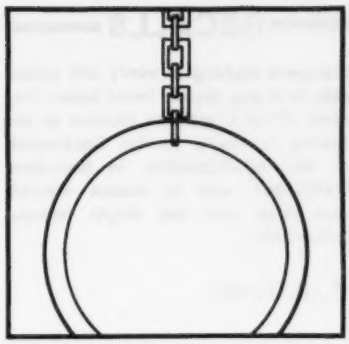
No asbestos has been found in the ceilings of either the Logan Building in downtown Washington or the Engineering Lab. Area Offices and Resident Posts are currently inspecting their own office settings.



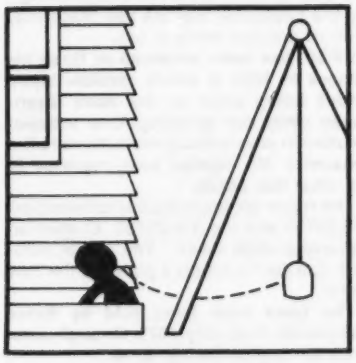
Heavy, bulky seats are hazardous, so choose lightweight seats which offer greater safety on impact. Replace heavy seats with lightweight ones.



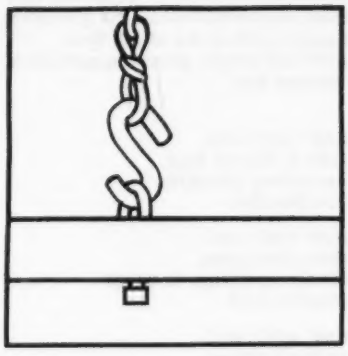
Moving parts on gliders and seesaws can pinch or crush fingers, so instruct youngsters to keep fingers and hands away from these parts.



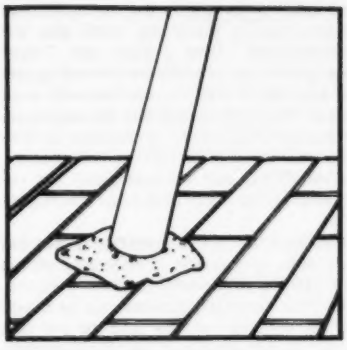
Avoid rings with diameters between 5 and 10 inches because of possible head entrapment. Discard these swinging exercise rings so children cannot play with them.



Swings require lots of room, so position playground equipment at least six feet away from other apparatus, fences, sandboxes, walkways, etc.



"S" hooks can pinch fingers, catch clothing. Use a pair of pliers to close the open-ended hooks tightly to stop the problems.



Falls are the greatest source of injury among children in playground activities, so choose soft surfaces under equipment. Sand and grass are better than concrete or asphalt.

SAFE PRACTICES REDUCE PLAYGROUND HAZARDS

Playground equipment continues to be a source of injury to the nation's youngsters—one injury occurring every four minutes.

According to statistics compiled by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, some 166,000 Americans received hospital emergency room treatment in 1979 for injuries which occurred while using public and home playground equipment. Children between the ages of 5 and 10 suffered most of the injuries—namely fractures, contusions, abrasions, concussions and lacerations.

Falls constitute the greatest source of playground injury to children. In 1977 when there were some 93,000 public playground injuries that required hospital emergency room attention, CPSC analysis showed that 72 per cent of all mishaps were due to falls.

Paved surfaces which represent about 10 per cent of playground surfaces accounted for almost 20 per cent of the injuries, and also for a disproportionate share of the severe injuries. Analysis of the injuries showed that about four per cent of the hospital visits were the result of playground equipment failure.

Since falls are quite common on swings, slides and seesaws, parents should erect the equipment away from hard surfaces. The more give to the surface, the better it is to land on. Locate home play apparatus at least six feet away from fences, walls and other equipment or obstructions.

Once or twice during the year, inspect the nuts, bolts and other hardware to make sure all connections are tight. If some parts of the equipment break, replace the damaged hardware or fittings as soon as possible so that the playground activity may be resumed with safety. Instruct youngsters in safe playing habits when using the equipment.

STUDY SHOWS SUPPORT FOR POISON SAFETY

A CPSC-sponsored study shows that a majority of consumers favor child-resistant closures (CRC's) for safety, yet do not always seek out products with CRC's or store them properly to prevent poisonings.

In this study of 3,000 households conducted by Chilton Research Services, CPSC sought information on consumers' attitudes, perceptions and behavior regarding the use of CRC's for products regulated by the Poison Prevention Packaging Act of 1970.

Eighty-seven percent of those interviewed with young children prefer safety caps to regular caps. Yet less than 50 percent check for a special cap when purchasing regulated products. About 20 percent have aspirin products in regular caps in the home, and about one-half have other regulated household products in regular containers—showing that they do not look for safety containers when shopping.

Some families with children under five also do not store poisonous products out of the reach of children, although more of these families are concerned with safe storage than are other consumers. Of families interviewed who have young children, one-quarter store medicines in places where children can reach them; about one-half store other household substances in potentially "unsafe" places.

Understandably, a high proportion of elderly and handicapped consumers interviewed preferred regular caps to safety caps. Yet, less than half (46 percent) knew that one size of regulated products, other than prescription drugs, are sold in regular containers for their use, if desired. Consumers or the prescribing physician may ask the pharmacist to put prescription drugs in non-CRC containers.

The elderly and handicapped also were most likely to replace a safety cap with a regular cap, or to transfer the contents to a non-CRC container. Both actions are unnecessary if they buy the exempt size package or ask for prescription drug packages with regular caps.

CHAIN SAW SAFETY MATERIALS READY

Information for consumers on the safe use of chain saws has recently been made available by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. These materials include a Chain Saw Consumer Information Guide, a Chain Saw Safety Display Box, a Chain Saw Safety Color Slide-Tape Presentation, and a Chain Saw Safety Discussion Leader Guide.

The **Chain Saw Consumer Information Guide** is an illustrated 12-page booklet intended to remind consumers of safety factors regarding selection, use, maintenance and storage of chain saws.

The **Chain Saw Safety Display Box** is a counter top exhibit intended to display and direct consumer attention to the Chain Saw Consumer Information Guide. These displays will be placed in chain saw retailers, repair shops, and rental firms located in cities and town near CPSC's Regional and District Offices.

A **Chain Saw Safety Color Slide-Tape Presentation** consists of an 18-minute, 80 slide presentation on chain saw safety tips with an accompanying cassette recording. The program will inform consumers on safety considerations for the selection, use, maintenance, and storage of chain saws—with a special emphasis on the danger of "kickback." Each CPSC Regional and District Office will be furnished with these slide-tape sets. They will also be made available through Modern Talking Picture Service, 5000 Park Street, N., St. Petersburg, Fl. 33709. Phone (813) 541-7571.

A 16-page booklet accompanies the slide-tape presentation and is titled **A Chain Saw Safety Discussion Leader Guide.**

CPSC MEMO is published monthly by the Office of Communications, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent regulatory agency charged with reducing unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products. CPSC is headed by five Commissioners appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Commissioners are Susan B. King, Chairman; Stuart M. Statler, Vice-Chairman; R. David Pittle; Edith Barksdale Sloan; and Sam Zagoria. Use of funds for printing this publication through September 30, 1982, approved by the Office of the Management and Budget. **The CPSC Toll-free Hotline is 800-638-8326; in Maryland 800-492-8363.**

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

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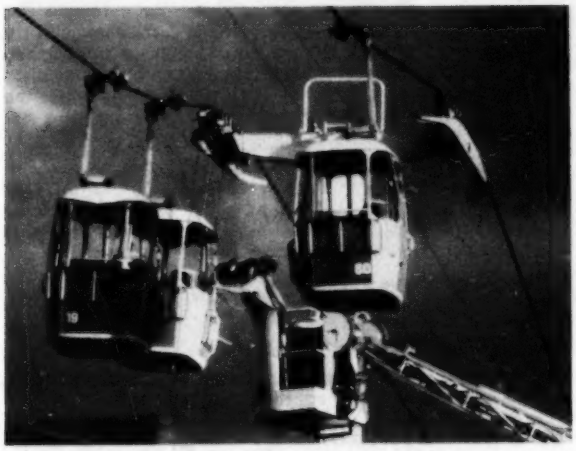
OCTOBER 1980

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207



A rescue took place after an accident on the Skyride at the State Fair of Texas in Dallas on October 21st of last year which resulted in the death of one man and injuries to 17 other persons. Photo courtesy of the **Dallas Morning News.**

COMPLAINTS ISSUED TO AMUSEMENT FIRMS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has issued formal complaints involving amusement ride accidents at three major amusement parks located in Texas, California and Illinois.

A two-count complaint was issued against the owner and the operator of the "Skyride" at the State Fair of Texas in Dallas in connection with a fatal accident which occurred on October 21, 1979.

The second complaint was issued against the Marriott Corporation which owns and operates "Willard's Whizzer" roller coasters at its Great America amusement parks located in Santa Clara, California (near San Jose), and Gurnee, Illinois (north of Chicago). A fatal accident occurred on March 29, 1980, at the Great America park in Santa Clara.

Both complaints charge that the corporations failed to report to CPSC in a timely fashion — as is required by law — potentially hazardous defects in the rides and previous accidents which have caused injuries to consumers. The law permits the Commission to seek civil penalties of as much as $500,000 from a company which fails to report to CPSC a defect that could create a substantial product hazard. The complaint against the State Fair of Texas also seeks correction of existing defects in the Skyride.

Unlike the Skyride complaint, the complaint against the Marriott Corporation does not call for the repair of defects in the Willard's Whizzers. CPSC staff believes that the

continued page 2

STANDARD VOTED FOR UNVENTED HEATERS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has approved a mandatory standard to improve the safety of unvented gas-fired space heaters, which are associated with approximately 70 deaths every year due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

The safety regulation will require by mid-1981 that manufacturers equip these heaters with an "ODS" (oxygen depletion safety shut-off system) to inhibit the buildup of life-threatening levels of carbon monoxide. An ODS functions by shutting off the heater's supply of gas when the oxygen level in the area has been reduced to 18 percent (compared to the normal level of oxygen in air of 20.9 percent).

The Commissioners, voting 3-to-2, approved the safety rule on the basis that existing technology is capable of applying ODS's to unvented heaters, and that a mandatory safety standard will encourage industry to equip each new heater with an ODS as soon as possible.

continued page 2

ENFORCEMENT UP IN '82 BUDGET REQUEST

Funds to reduce the number of home fires, to detect cancer-causing chemicals in consumer products, to develop a mandatory safety standard for chain saws, and to expand its product recall and enforcement programs have been requested by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

In its fiscal year 1982 budget request, the agency seeks $47,713,000 and 959 full-time staff positions, an increase of $4.224 million and 13 positions over that sought for fiscal year 1981. CPSC's FY '82 request is $3 million more than the $44.7 million which the Office of Management and Budget had recommended for the agency.

The requested amounts are necessary to deal with hazard situations that demand action, Commissioners noted in the budget request.

Singled out for continued work in FY '82 were the following:

Fire: With some 8,700 deaths and 300,000 injuries each year due to accidental fires, CPSC believes lives could be saved and property damage reduced by addressing the hazards of smoldering ignition sources, toxic fumes, home wiring and heating systems, and by installing smoke detectors.

"Improving upholstered furniture's resistance to smoldering ignition sources such as cigarettes could save over 1,000 lives a year," the Commission noted. "If the voluntary program developed by the industry is not producing furniture able to resist smoldering ignition, the Commission will take mandatory action in this area."

continued page 2

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AMUSEMENT FIRMS *from page 1*

roller coasters in the Santa Clara and Gurnee parks have been repaired to eliminate known defects.

At the State Fair of Texas last October a Skyride accident resulted in the death of one man and injuries to 17 other persons when two of the Skyride's gondolas fell approximately 70 feet onto the midway area of the state fair.

The Commission complaint charges that the State Fair of Texas and the operator of the Skyride, Steck and Stapf Attractions, exposed consumers to a "substantial product hazard" through their operation of the Skyride. The staff is seeking to require the owner and the operator promptly to correct defects in the ride. (CPSC is informed that the Skyride has not been in operation since it was shut down after the fatal accident last October.)

In the second count of the complaint, the Commission is charging that the State Fair and Steck and Stapf Attractions also violated the law by failing to report information to CPSC from which the State Fair and the operator could conclude that the Skyride contained a defect which could create a substantial product hazard.

The complaint against the Marriott Corporation follows an accident on March 29, 1980, in which a 14-year-old boy was killed and eight other persons injured when two cars of the Willard's Whizzer collided at the Great America park in Santa Clara.

In the complaint the Commission charges that Marriott violated the law by not reporting a potential defect in the roller coaster's braking system of which Marriott was aware, according to the Commission, by September 1979, at the latest.

In addition, CPSC staff is charging that Marriott was aware of at least 11 other instances in the Santa Clara park which occurred between 1976 and 1979 involving collisions in the station area of the roller coaster. A substantial number of injuries occurred in these accidents, although the exact number and severity of injuries remains unknown to the agency; there are believed to have been no fatalities involved in the earlier accidents at Santa Clara.

The CPSC complaint also cites two instances in 1976 in which accidents occurred on the Willard's Whizzer at the Great America in Gurnee, Illinois. One accident on July 24, 1976, resulted in injuries to 13 persons, and a second accident less than a month later (August 18, 1976) injured as many as 18 persons, according to the CPSC complaint.

Both complaints will result in public hearings conducted by a federal administrative law judge who will rule on the complaint at the conclusion of each hearing. The opinion of the administrative law judge, by law, may be appealed to the full Commission. Further appeal to a federal district court is available.

CPSC staff has been involved in the potential hazards associated with amusement park rides since the agency's creation in 1973. In 1977 the Commission filed suit against the Chance Manufacturing Co. of Wichita, Kansas, the manufacturer of a ride called the "Zipper". Over a four-year period prior to 1977, four persons had been killed in four separate accidents when the locking mechanism on the Zipper's door failed, causing the door to open in mid-air. The case was settled out of court.

Since then, CPSC's authority to inspect amusement park rides and to require correction of hazardous defects has been contested routinely in court. The debate centers on whether amusement rides are "consumer products" within the meaning of CPSC statutes.

A total of four lawsuits have resulted in three court decisions which uphold the Commission's position that amusement rides are within CPSC's jurisdiction. These cases include the Zipper ride and two Skyride cases (including the Dallas Skyride). Three of the decisions are currently on appeal.

One federal court has ruled that CPSC did not have jurisdiction over a Skyride being operated at Disneyland in Anaheim, California.

The CPSC complaints were issued on the eve of the Labor Day weekend and at the peak of the seasonal consumer interest in amusement parks, state fairs and carnivals. Statistics compiled by Commission staff indicate that approximately 10 deaths occur every year which are associated with amusement rides at permanent amusement parks and traveling carnivals. There are an estimated 6,000 to 8,000 injuries every year on these rides.

UNVENTED HEATERS *from page 1*

Commissioners David Pittle and Sam Zagoria, who voted in the minority, both approved the standard in principle. However, they voted to postpone consideration of whether to issue the rule until March, 1981. Both argued that the majority's decision was premature in light of the public commitment of both the American Gas Association and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to require the system on virtually the same timetable as the Commission's mandatory standard.

The standard will require all unvented gas heaters which are manufactured or imported after June 14, 1981, to be equipped with an ODS. Because the usual production cycle for such heaters runs from early each year only through June, the standard will have its initial effect on heaters manufactured for the 1982-83 heating season.

Unvented gas-fired space heaters are among the least expensive heating appliances on the market today, according to CPSC staff. A medium-sized heater currently costs a consumer approximately $170 to $180, can be operated at lower costs than vented gas-fired heaters and has very high thermal efficiency.

Many of the people who purchase these heaters are elderly or from low-income groups and reside in rural areas in southeastern and southcentral states where the mild climate makes central heating systems uneconomical.

'82 BUDGET REQUEST *from page 1*

Chronic Chemical Hazards: Some 25,000 chemicals are used in the manufacture of consumer products, but only some are suspected of causing cancer in humans. Asbestos, formaldehyde, benzidine type dyes, lead and carbon monoxide are but a few of 600 chemicals and by-products that have undergone screening, but hazard assessment remains to be conducted. After this, control options and regulations for those chemicals deemed hazardous to consumers will follow.

In FY '82, the agency expects to screen 150 new chemicals, to finalize a ban or labeling rule on asbestos-containing products, and to develop/explore control options for non-foam, non-particle board/plywood uses of formaldehyde. Rules covering textile and non-textile uses of benzidine type dyes are also projected for the year.

Chain Saws: "Chain saw injuries are rising even faster than sales," CPSC Commissioners noted. More than half of the 220,000 power tool injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms in 1979 involved chain saws and power lawnmowers. CPSC halted its participation in voluntary standards efforts this year in favor of developing a mandatory standard for chain saws. Commissioners said they are hopeful that the agency will issue a final rule on chain saws in FY '82.

Enforcement Program: "A good enforcement program can be a powerful incentive to voluntary action," Commissioners noted. CPSC plans quick analysis and follow-up of reports of possible product hazards under Section 15, and moves to require industry to meet its obligation to report and correct product hazards.

Aside from the continuation of programs begun in prior years, Commissioners pointed to some specific program objectives to be accomplished in FY '82.

Communications antennas. Work is progressing and there is reason to expect a final safety standard in FY '82. In 1979, there were some 45 electrocutions involving television and CB antennas.

Swimming Pool Slides. Public hearings are expected in FY '81 before the staff recommends whether to revoke the swimming pool slide standard.

Commissioners noted that a decision on urea-formaldehyde foam insulation is likely in FY '82 as well as a regulation covering thrown objects for power lawnmowers. A 1981 safety education program for expectant parents, which begins this fall, would be among the expanded information and education programs for 1982.

TWO DIRECTORATES ARE REORGANIZED

Two internal CPSC reorganizational moves have been announced recently.

Chairman Susan B. King announced the reorganization of the Office of General Counsel and the Directorate of Compliance and Enforcement to be effective November 2, 1980.

Executive Director Richard A. Gross announced that the Directorate for Engineering and Sciences was reorganized on September 6, 1980. All functions of the former Directorate will be performed by the new Directorate for Engineering and Sciences and the Directorate for Health Sciences.

Chairman King said the OGC and DC&E change will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the legal and enforcement efforts of the Commission.

Under the reorganization, the Office of General Counsel will be assigned responsibility for preparing and representing the Commission in all federal court litigation, with the assistance of the Directorate for Compliance and Administrative Litigation in Section 12 and Section 15(g) cases.

Several attorney positions will be transferred from the Directorate of Compliance and Enforcement to OGC. A second Deputy General Counsel position will be established in OGC to supervise an expanded Enforcement and Information Division.

The Directorate of Compliance and Enforcement will have responsibility for administrative litigation. It will be renamed the "Directorate for Compliance and Administrative Litigation." The Directorate will contain three divisions, the Division of Regulation Management, the Division of Corrective Actions, and a new Division of Administrative Litigation which will contain all of the Directorate's litigation functions.

The Directorate, along with its other responsibilities, will be involved in all Section 15 activities; will initiate administrative enforcement cases brought before an Administrative Law Judge; and will provide guidance to the Field during development of administrative cases.

In announcing the new Directorate for Health Sciences, the Executive Director said the internal division structures of both Directorates continue unchanged, and present Engineering and Sciences support staff will be realigned to provide the necessary support to both Directorates.

Recruitment for the AED for Engineering Sciences is underway. Don Clay has been designated as Deputy AED for Engineering Sciences and will take the lead in the Directorate during the recruitment process. Peter Preuss will serve as the permanent AED for Health Sciences.

Executive Director Gross stated that this reorganization offers a number of advantages over the former structure and will provide a more efficient and effective organization for CPSC's engineering and health functions.

"EARLY OUT" ALLOWS SEVERAL TO RETIRE

Seven retirements were announced at CPSC at the end of August due to unusual circumstances concerning cost-of-living increases. The cost-of-living increases are currently given twice a year for retirees. This year, if a Federal employee were to retire prior to the September 1 cost-of-living, he or she would be entitled to the six percent increase of March 1980 as well as the September COL increase.

The following seven CPSC employees retired: Harry Garber (Compliance and Enforcement), Thomas Allen (Engineering and Sciences) Jules Bigio, (Engineering and Sciences), Phyllis Buxbaum Greenberg (Compliance and Enforcement), Walter Johnson (Communications), David Howes (Engineering and Sciences) and John Gomilla (Field Operations).

Georg S. Maisel, Director of CPSC's Division of Poison Prevention and Scientific Coordination in the Directorate for Health Sciences, demonstrates a new machine which is used for measuring forces for opening and closing child-resistant packaging. Use of this machine in the future may result in mechanical standards as an alternate to the present "200-Child" panel testing.

CONSUMER ED WEEK SET FOR OCT. 5-12

President Carter has proclaimed the week of October 5 as National Consumer Education Week to focus national attention on the benefits of consumer education.

In addition to CPSC's day-to-day activities to provide information on consumer product safety, the Commission's regional offices have planned special programs and activities to promote Consumer Education Week.

Staff from the New York Regional Office will participate in a Consumer Education Fair for teachers, librarians, civic and business leaders on October 6. The Fair is being sponsored by the Consumer Education Services in Edison, N.J.

Students in the Los Angeles area have been invited to attend two open-house presentations on October 6.

On October 7, staff from the CPSC Kansas City Regional Office will attend an assembly of students at the Lee Summit High School. The CPSC presentation will be videotaped to be used in product safety training classes.

In Denver the May D & F Plaza will be the site of lunch hour exhibits on October 7, 8 and 9. Some 30 federal, state and local agencies (including the Colorado State Attorney's Office) will provide information on food safety, energy, housing, health, credit, consumer fraud, and product safety.

The Seattle District Office of CPSC will join other federal, state and local agencies in Seattle in hosting an all-day consumer forum on October 9 at the Seattle Federal Building. Topics on the agenda include saving energy safely, radiation hazards, mail fraud, landlord-tenant laws, communicable diseases and product safety.

On October 10, the Dallas Regional Office will sponsor a safety film festival in the lobby of the Dallas Federal Building. The Albuquerque Resident Office will also host a film program on October 8 and welcome visitors to an open-house in its offices following the showing of the film.

RECALLS

Consumers wishing to verify any model numbers of any recalls listed below may contact CPSC's toll-free Hotline at the following numbers: In the continental U.S., dial 800/638-8326; in Maryland, 800/492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 800/638-8333. A teletypewriter for the deaf is available on the following numbers: National (including Alaska and Hawaii) 800/638-8270, Maryland residents only 800/492-8104. During non-working hours, messages are recorded and answered on the following working day.

CRIB DECORATIONS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced that approximately 8,000 elastic crib decorations known as "Kickers" are being recalled voluntarily by their manufacturer. CPSC staff believes that the decorations may pose a strangulation hazard to infants.

The recall is being conducted in cooperation with CPSC to prevent any potential strangulations, although no injuries had been reported to the Commission or the manufacturer.

Each "Kicker" crib decoration, manufactured by Rainbow Artisans, Inc., of Livingston, New Jersey, consists of four or five soft-sculptured fabric designs strung on a white elastic cord. A plastic ring is attached to each end of the elastic cord so that the decoration may be stretched across a crib or baby carriage and tied to the sides with ribbons.

The crib decorations are manufactured in such a way that, if kicked or handled by an infant, the fabric designs may slide from one side of the elastic cord to the other. Such actions may expose enough elastic cord to present a potential strangulation hazard if parents place the product too close to the infant, according to CPSC staff.

The "Kickers" being recalled were manufactured from January 1977, through January 1980, and were sold nationwide for approximately $12 in retail and specialty stores.

Consumers who own this product may obtain a free repair kit by cutting the elastic cord, removing the fabric designs and mailing *only* the cord and plastic rings to: Rainbow Artisans, Inc., 19 Troy Drive, Livingston, New Jersey 07039.

The kit includes a new cotton cord, ribbon and instructions for restringing the designs.

TOY MOBILES

Approximately 2,300 stuffed mobile toys which may pose a strangulation hazard to infants are being recalled by their importer, Albert E. Price, Inc., of Bellmawr, New Jersey.

The recall is being conducted voluntarily in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The recall applies to two types of stuffed animal mobiles which are intended to be suspended from ceilings or cribs by a metal spring and two white string cords.

Although no deaths or injuries have been associated with these toys, a similar toy imported by another firm was involved last year in the strangulation of an 11-month-old baby girl when she became entangled in the elastic cords suspending it from her crib. Those toys have since been recalled.

The Albert Price toys being recalled include a duck, model 9160, and an elephant, model 9161. Both toys are covered with plush fabric. The importer's name is printed on a tag attached to each animal, and the model numbers appear on the boxes in which the toys are sold.

The toys were imported from Taiwan and distributed in the U.S. from May through September, 1979. They have been sold nationwide for less than $10 in toy stores and other retail outlets.

Parents immediately should cut off the cords and the spring. To receive a full refund, consumers should return the toy to place of purchase.

STEREO TURNTABLES

Approximately 5,600 stereo turntables are being recalled by their manufacturer, Philips High Fidelity Laboratories, Ltd., of Knoxville, Tennessee, because they may pose a shock hazard to consumers.

The recall is being conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Philips is a subsidiary of Magnavox Consumer Electronics Co., of Knoxville, Tennessee.

The turntables were wired improperly so that "safety fuses," which serve as circuit breakers, do not operate. In the event of a short circuit, consumers could receive a severe electrical shock by touching any metal part on the turntable or any metal components connected to the turntable. No injuries or deaths have been reported to the company or to CPSC.

The recall includes Philips turntable models 22AF685/44B and 22AF685/94B. The turntables have been sold nationwide since March 1979, for approximately $140 in stereo-equipment retail outlets. The model numbers are printed on a label affixed to the bottom of the turntable base.

Owners should contact the dealer from whom the unit was purchased or the Philips Consumer Affairs Department to make arrangements for free repairs. The company's toll-free number is 800-251-9104; in Tennessee, call 615-521-4460, and ask for Consumer Affairs.

ADDITIONAL HAIR DRYERS WITH ASBESTOS RECALLED

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced that more than 87,000 additional hair dryers are being recalled because they were manufactured with asbestos. The majority of the dryers are professional hand-held models sold for use in barber shops and hair salons.

The recalls are being conducted voluntarily by four companies, including the K-Mart Corporation, of Troy, Michigan; Rolf Brauchli, Inc., of Skokie, Illinois; Nino Originals, of Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Select Beauty Brands, Inc., of Carle Place, New York.

K-Mart is recalling approximately 15,000 model 890 hand-held dryers supplied by Brother International, of Piscataway, New Jersey, and sold to consumers under the K-Mart label since 1972.

Consumers whose dryers are in working condition can exchange them for a depreciated cash refund of $1.79, or a new Westminister brand AM/FM "Weather Band" radio (model TV1 or TV2). Dryers should be mailed by no later than February 15, 1981, to Service Center, Hiroaka New York, Inc., Room A22, 111 8th Avenue, New York, New York, 10011. Postage costs will be reimbursed.

The Rolf Brauchli recall covers approximately 27,000 "Solano" brand model 130 hand-held dryers and about 17,000 "Solanotronic" brand model 131 hand-held dryers commonly used by professional hair stylists.

The firm will replace each asbestos liner with a liner made from mica at no cost to consumers, who should return the dryer to the barber shop or beauty salon where purchased, or to Rolf Brauchli, Inc., 8044 N. Lawndale, Skokie, Illinois, 60076. Professionals should mail the dryers for repairs directly to the firm at the address listed above. Both professionals and consumers will be reimbursed for postage and insurance costs.

The Nino Originals recall includes thousands of its "World Champion" 1300 watt and its "Nino 1000" brand 1300 watt hand-held dryers.

Consumers should return the dryers to the place of purchase for free repairs to remove the asbestos liner. Professionals should mail the dryers for repairs to Nino Originals, 6632 Penn Avenue S., Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55423.

Select Beauty Brands, Inc., also is recalling thousands of hand-held hair dryers, including the Royal model 550 and Royal model 1008.

Professional hair stylists and consumers should mail the dryers to Select Beauty Brands, Inc., 333 Westbury Avenue, Carle Place, New York, 11514. The firm will replace the asbestos heat shield with a mica shield at no cost and will reimburse postage costs.

A CPSC employee examines a clutch/brake in a lawnmower which may be unable to meet the CPSC lawnmower standard.

LAWNMOWER INDUSTRY REQUESTS EXTENSION

Claiming they have been unable to develop a suitable clutch and brake mechanism, the lawnmower industry has requested a 6-month extension before implementation of the lawnmower standard.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute held a demonstration September 16 at CPSC Bethesda Office to demonstrate difficulties in development of the clutch/brake design. Manufacturers of mowers, engines and clutches took part in the demonstration.

The CPSC lawnmower standard, which requires that the blade stop within 3 seconds after the handle is released, is scheduled to become effective January 1, 1982. By delaying the effective date 6 months, the industry would have an additional mowing season to perfect and test the clutch mechanisms.

Industry representatives demonstrated eight mowers with difficulties such as excessive vibration, slippage, stalling, slow clutch engagement, restarting problems, noisy operation and others.

The Commission was expected to decide whether or not to grant the extension at the time the *CPSC Memo* was scheduled to go to press.

REGIONAL OFFICE NEWS

The Edison, N.J. Resident Office has investigated the collapse of a swimming pool slide which had plastic panels. Six persons were reported injured in the accident. The New Jersey Department of Labor's Carnival-Amusement Ride Division has subsequently banned these slides in New Jersey.

An exhibit sponsored by the Kansas City Federal Executive Board and with approximately 40 federal agencies participating, was presented September 25 in Kansas City, Mo. Consumer information materials were distributed.

SOLAR POOL COVERS LINKED TO DROWNINGS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has issued a national alert to warn consumers of the risk of swimming in pools partially covered with "solar pool covers."

Following reports of a tragic triple-drowning accident at a suburban San Francisco home this summer, Commission staff members are strongly urging consumers never to swim in pools which partially are covered by such solar pool covers.

On June 21, a 30-year-old woman and her two sons, aged five and two years, drowned when they apparently became entrapped under the solar pool cover. CPSC staff members currently are investigating the tragedy and other incidents which may have involved similar circumstances.

A "solar pool cover" is a buoyant, translucent plastic cover designed to be cut to fit the shape of an individual swimming pool. It is placed flat upon the surface of the pool water to heat the water through passive solar energy from the sun. Advertisements suggest that these devices also are capable of reducing evaporation of water from the pool.

CPSC staff members are informed of four additional deaths by drowning in recent years which were related to pool covers of various types, including solar pool covers. There also is one report of a pet dog which fell into a swimming pool and drowned beneath a solar pool cover.

CPSC staff members estimate that perhaps several hundred thousand of these solar pool covers have been sold nationwide, predominantly within the past few years. The cost of each pool cover can average $200 or more, depending on the size of the pool's surface; in some cases, the covers are sold as original equipment when the pool is installed.

Swimmers who swim under part of a solar pool cover risk surfacing into the device and being unable to breathe. In attempting to find air, it is possible that swimmers might become disoriented and unintentionally swim further under the pool cover. The Commission is urging pool owners never to leave such a pool cover partially in place. Swimmers should not enter a pool where there may be a solar cover partially covering the water's surface.

As it completes its investigation, CPSC simultaneously will consider regulatory options available under the authority of the Consumer Product Safety Act. If the investigation concludes that a regulatory approach is appropriate, various alternatives could include recalling all such products that present a substantial hazard; requiring that these products meet certain safety standards; or if such standards are not possible, banning such products. CPSC also might require such products to display prominent warning labels.

If consumers wish to provide additional information to CPSC on swimming pool solar covers and their potential danger, they may call CPSC's toll-free Hotline at 800-638-8326. In Maryland, call 800-492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, call 800-638-8333.

CPSC INVESTIGATING CRIB STRANGULATIONS

The CPSC is currently investigating strangulation hazards posed by certain crib designs. The investigation covers both full size and non-full-size cribs.

Eight children have been strangled after becoming trapped in the cutout designs of crib headboards or footboards. In these accidents, the children's necks were small enough to slip into the cutout but their heads were caught in the narrow opening.

To eliminate cutouts that pose an entrapment risk, the Commission is considering a performance test using a special test device. The device is designed to represent the largest head and smallest neck of a 2 to 3 year old child, based on anatomical data provided by a University of Michigan study. The test would involve passing the device through a cutout opening to be sure that no unreasonable entrapment hazard exists.

A second hazard pattern being studied involves strangulation of children who have caught their clothing, loops of ribbon, etc. on crib finials, corner posts, headboards, or other catchpoints, or who became tangled in the cords of toys suspended from these catchpoints. The Commission cautions against tying pacifiers or other toys around an infant's neck, because long cords, ribbons, and strings can be snagged on a crib or can become wound around an infant's neck, possibly causing strangulation.

Loose, full clothing such as night shirts or baby gowns have also been involved in strangulations. Older babies have been hanged when their clothing caught on a crib finial or corner post as they were climbing out of the crib. The Commission urges parents to avoid baby clothing which might easily catch on a part of the crib, or become wrapped too tightly around an active, climbing youngster.

NATIONAL PRODUCT SAFETY NEWS....

Smoke Detectors

All homes and apartments in the City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were required to have smoke detectors by order of the Milwaukee Common Council. According to the *Milwaukee Journal* newspaper, the smoke detector ordinance will apply to all homes, rooming houses, children's homes and community-based residential facilities in the city. CPSC has advocated the use of smoke detectors in homes as part of a home fire protection plan.

Kite Electrocution

The electrocution of a 14-year-old boy in Bristol, Pennsylvania after the youth's kite struck a series of electrical wires was recently investigated by the CPSC staff. The kite was made of plastic with a metallic framework. The ninth grade student was flying the kite with cord that consisted of thin gauge copper wire wrapped in a nylon-like material. CPSC staffers warned against use of any metallic material as wire for kite cord. The Commission banned all aluminized polyester film kites in October 1979.

Energy Fair

The Georgia Community Action Association has announced it will hold a Southeast Energy Fair scheduled for October 23 and 24 at the Columbus, Ga. Ironworks Convention and Trade Center. The two-day event is encouraging the participation of all producers of energy conservation products. The producers will be able to meet with the large and ready market of Federally-funded, regionally operated weatherization programs. The Fair will be co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Community Services Administration, the University of Georgia, the Georgia Institute of Technology, the Southeastern Energy Technical Group, and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

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PETITION TO DELAY MOWER RULE DENIED

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has unanimously denied a request to delay the effective date for its mandatory product safety standard for walk-behind power lawn mowers.

The standard, intended to prevent or reduce the severity of an estimated 60,000 contact blade injuries suffered annually by consumers, will become effective in January 1982. The mower industry, through the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), had petitioned for an extension - until June 1982 - of the effective date.

In voting to deny OPEI's petition the Commissioners emphasized the need to bring about a reduction of injury risks for consumers and expressed the belief that industry would be able to comply with the present effective date. Chairman Susan B. King said that "injuries from power mowers are not declining...." Commissioner David R. Pittle noted that it had "taken five years to complete (the) standard...." and he saw "no evidence compelling enough to offset the additional injuries to consumers" if an extension were allowed.

Commissioner Stuart M. Statler said he viewed "the hazard area (addressed by the standard) as one of the most important the Commission has ever addressed..... Even before the Commission was established, the hazard was well defined," Statler said.

Statler said he was "not persuaded any further delay in this necessary standard is needed." Commissioners Sam Zagoria and Edith B. Sloan stated their agreements.

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CHAIR FLAMMABILITY TESTS 'DISAPPOINT'

Test results are disappointing near the half-way point in the Consumer Product Safety Commission's testing program of upholstered furniture built according to the upholstered furniture industry's specifications to be cigarette ignition resistant.

Of 39 upholstered chairs tested for cigarette ignition resistance, 28 chairs, or 72 per cent of those tested, showed at least one ignition. It had been anticipated that more of these chairs would resist ignition from cigarettes.

The 39 chairs are part of a planned purchase-test program of the Commission to determine the effectiveness of the Upholstered Furniture Action Council's (UFAC) Voluntary Action Program to reduce the risks of cigarette ignition of upholstered furniture.

continued page 2

A chain saw is tested for kickback energy by Frank Vitaliti, mechanical engineer, at CPSC's Engineering Laboratory. Approximately 30 gas and electrically powered chain saws will be analyzed for safety in the testing program.

CPSC MOVES TOWARD CHAIN SAW STANDARD

The Consumer Product Safety Commission announced in the *Federal Register* on September 18,1980 it intends to develop a proposed safety standard for chain saws and their components and replacement parts. The safety standard will be designed to reduce the risk of injuries to consumers caused by chain saw kickback.

Kickback is a sudden upward and/or backward movement of the saw caused by interference with the moving chain on the saw. Interference which can cause kickback may come from the chain binding in the cut; by the chain hitting an unusually hard portion or other object or obstruction in the wood being cut; or by the chain striking the wood or another object on the top quadrant of the tip of the bar.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that nearly 100,000 people were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries related to chain saws last year. Since 1976, more than 60 deaths from chain saw injuries have been reported to the Commission.

In recent years, the use of wood-burning stoves and

continued page 2

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CHAIN SAWS *from page 1*

fireplaces has become popular. The use of chain saws to cut firewood has also increased.

It is estimated that 3.5 million chain saws were shipped in interstate commerce in 1979 compared to 2.3 million in 1970. This increase in the use of chain saws has produced more than 20,000 additional estimated injuries over the total for 1976. It is further estimated that about 23 percent of the injuries associated with chain saws resulted from "kickback."

In a letter dated March 21, 1977, John Purtle, of Batesville, Arkansas, petitioned the Commission to begin proceedings under Section 7 of the Consumer Product Safety Act to develop a mandatory safety standard to "minimize and prevent chain saw kickback." While the Commission staff was evaluating the petition, the Chain Saw Manufacturers Association (CSMA) recommended that the petition be denied on the ground that a mandatory standard was not needed because the industry was taking significant voluntary steps to address the chain saw kickback hazard.

In December 1977, CSMA proposed a joint 18 month effort with the Commission to develop a voluntary performance standard. Subsequently, the Commission denied the petition of March 21, 1977, for a mandatory standard and shortly afterwards formally agreed to participate with CSMA in a joint effort to develop a voluntary performance standard to reduce chain saw kickback injuries.

CPSC staff's evaluation of the CSMA draft standard left serious doubts that the standard would reduce injuries associated with chain saws. This conclusion, along with the failure of CSMA to perform the development process in the manner specified in the CPSC agreement, caused CPSC to determine that it could not rely solely on the voluntary process to offer protection to the public from the risk of chain saw kickback injuries.

By November 30, the Commission expects to publish a *Federal Register* notice formally beginning the standard development proceeding, stating the development plan for the standard, and describing how and when interested persons may participate in the development of the proposed standard for chain saw kickback.

FLAMMABILITY TESTS *from page 1*

These preliminary test results are contained in an interim report to the Commission prepared by the fire and thermal burn program staff.

Last November the Commission voted to defer any regulatory action on the flammability of upholstered furniture for one year. The one-year period was provided to determine the effectiveness of the UFAC program in reducing the cigarette-ignition risks of upholstered furniture.

The 39 chairs--the first of approximately 80 to be tested--were selected from among those identified by the industry as in conformance with UFAC's voluntary program. They were purchased by field office personnel from various retail outlets.

Early examination of the test data indicates side and back crevice areas are the most likely to ignite if a lighted cigarette is dropped in any of these areas. The welt area was the next most prevalent ignition site. In a few units, ignitions also occurred in the flat surface cushion area.

In addition to UFAC component tests on the chairs tested, the staff's interim report also describes furniture mockup tests of the component materials; these mockup tests are based on a draft of a possible proposed mandatory standard. When the component tests and the mockup tests are completed, the data should indicate how well either group of tests can predict the actual full-scale burn behavior.

Besides the laboratory chair-testing, CPSC's evaluation program includes a survey of the UFAC furniture on the retail market. UFAC furniture may be identified by a distinctive gold tag. A count is being made by teams of consumer deputies working under the direction of the agency's field offices.

The interim report states that, in the first count phase, 156 stores were visited, the deputies counting approximately 20,000 pieces of furniture produced by 400 different manufacturers. Of these, 11,238 pieces of furniture (57 per cent) were produced by companies pledged to support the UFAC program. Of the pieces produced by UFAC members, 3,987 (35.5 per cent) displayed UFAC gold labels.

Similar results were noted for both inner city and suburban stores. A second count is being conducted this fall.

Meanwhile, the CPSC staff has renewed its work to improve the CPSC draft proposed mandatory standard. The revised standard will be submitted to the Commissioners as part of the staff's one-year evaluation report on the UFAC voluntary program.

REGIONAL OFFICE NEWS

The **Kansas City** Regional Office assisted in planning an IRLG Town Meeting held September 23 with the Omaha Safety Council and the University of Nebraska-Omaha. (IRLG is composed of CPSC, FDA, OSHA, EPA and the FSQS of USDA.) The regional administrators of each of the IRLG agencies participated in the question and answer session.

During National Consumer Education Week observed last month, the **Kansas City** Regional Office presented a program on the functions of CPSC at Lee's Summit High School. The program was videotaped for later viewing by more than 1,000 students.

Robert Baxter, of the **Kansas City** Regional Office, was the proponent for federal regulatory agencies at the annual Debate Symposium at the University of Iowa in September. The symposium was attended by more than 300 high school and college debaters from 10 states.

MOWER RULE *from page 1*

The CPSC mandatory standard will require that the blades of rotary mowers stop within three seconds after the operator's hands are removed from the normal position on the handle. Rotary mowers must also have shielding to prevent foot-contact with the blade at the rear o: the mowers. The regulation requires both rotary and reel-type mowers to bear warning labels.

In its petition, the industry had stated it had difficulty in developing a suitable clutch and brake mechanism and sought the six-month extension for further field testing of its product before implementation of the standard.

25 NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED TO 3 ADVISORY BOARDS

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced the appointment of 25 new members to the three advisory committees which assist the Commission in its regulatory activities.

Among the new members elected to represent consumers, industry, and local government are a senior engineer from Consumers Union, a vice president of the Mattel Toy Co., and the president of the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators. Each new member will serve a two-year term beginning October 1, 1980.

Product Safety Advisory Council

There are seven new members on the 15-member Product Safety Advisory Council, which provides the Commission with recommendations on general policy matters and suggests solutions to individual problems related to product safety. The Council is balanced equally with representatives of consumers, industry, and local government.

The two new consumer representatives are:

- Salvatore Divita, of Potomac, Maryland; professor of business administration at the George Washington University.
- George Papritz, of Riverside, Connecticut; senior engineer and chief of standards for the Consumers Union of the United States; Mount Vernon, New York.

The two new government representatives are:

- Rosemary Pooler, of Syracuse, New York; executive director, New York State Consumer Protection Board.
- Tim Ryles, of Stone Mountain, Georgia; administrator, Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs. Mr. Ryles also serves as president of the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators.

The three new industry representatives are:

- John Burnett, of Westbury, New York, executive director, Better Business Bureau of Harlem.
- Paul Olson, of Portland, Oregon; manager, Energy Conservation Division, Neil Kelly Designers/Remodelers.
- Charles Williams, of Inglewood, California; vice-president, Product Safety and Quality Assurance, Mattel Toys. Mr. Williams also serves as president, Product Safety Association.

Technical Advisory Committee on Poison Prevention Packaging

The Technical Advisory Committee on Poison Prevention Packaging helps to guide the Commission in the administration of the Poison Prevention Packaging Act. Eight new members have been appointed to this 18-member panel composed of eight consumer representatives, eight industry representatives, one representative appointed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and one representative appointed by the Secretary of Commerce.

The three new consumer representatives are:

- Bettye Anne Chambers, of Charleston, South Carolina; volunteer consultant in the health safety area and president-elect of the South Carolina Public Health Association.
- Joseph Veltri, of Salt Lake City, Utah; Associate Professor of Pharmacy, University of Utah and director of the Intermountain Regional Poison Control Center.
- Elsie Wieczorowski, M.D., of Chicago, Illinois; retired pediatrician.

The five new industry representatives are:

- George Kalidonis, of Barrington, Illinois; president and chief executive officer, Climaco Corp. Chicago, Illinois.
- Francine Bellet Kushner, of San Francisco, California; manager of government affairs, Clorox Co.
- Kenneth Mehrle, of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, president, National Association of Retail Druggists, pharmacist and owner, Medical Arts Pharmacy.
- Andrew Mason, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; manager of prescription packaging, Kerr Glass Manufacturing Corp.
- Austin Moody, Charlotte, North Carolina; marketing manager, Healthcare, Flexible Packaging Division, Rexham Corp.

National Advisory Committee on Flammable Fabrics Act

The National Advisory Committee for the Flammable Fabrics Act provides guidance to the Commission on flammability standards and regulations. Ten new representatives have been appointed to the 20-member panel comprised of 10 consumer representatives and 10 industry representatives.

The four new consumer representatives are:

- Ira Block, of Bowie, Maryland; Associate Professor, Department of Textiles and Consumer Economics, University of Maryland.
- Philip Favro, of Carmichael, California; California State Fire Marshall.
- Margaret Henry, of Wilmington, Delaware; executive director, Girls Clubs of Delaware, Inc.
- Ann Turbyne, R.N., of Hewitt, New Jersey; the Burn Center of the Westchester County, New York Medical Center.

The six new industry representatives are:

- Giedre Ambrozaitis, of Kalamazoo, Michigan; president, Kalamazoo Valley Afghan & Knit Wool Company.
- William Baitinger, of Raleigh, North Carolina; director, Product Safety Research, Cotton, Inc.
- Manson Carter, of Needham, Massachusetts; vice-chairman and director, William Carter Company.
- Louis Raether, Webster Grove, Missouri; president, Fire Retardant Chemicals Assn. and product manager for the Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Co., St. Louis, Missouri.
- William Shaw, of Moore, South Carolina; manager of technical information for Hoechst Fibers Industries.
- J. Spratt White, of Ft. Mill, South Carolina; attorney and assistant secretary, Spring Mills, Inc.

For more details on the advisory committees, contact CPSC's Office of Public Participation, Washington, D.C. 20207.

NEW MANAGEMENT TEAM FOR PHILADELPHIA

Otto T. Hall has been named to head a new management team at CPSC's Philadelphia Regional Office.

Mr. Hall, who has been appointed director of the office, comes to the Commission from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in Birmingham, Alabama. He was the manager for EEOC programs for the states of Alabama and Mississippi.

Previous to this, Mr. Hall was a management specialist for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. He has extensive experience in public administration and criminal justice, having served as Assistant City Manager for the City of Compton, California, court administrator for the Los Angeles County Municipal Court and executive director of the Alameda County (Ca.) Regional Criminal Justice Planning Board.

Mr. Hall holds a Bachelor of Sciences degree from California State University at Los Angeles.

Carl L. Francis has been appointed Deputy Director of the Philadelphia office. Mr. Francis had been a Supervisory EEO Specialist for the Higher Education Branch, Office of Civil Rights, for the U.S. Office of Education in Philadelphia since 1972.

Also named to the management team were John R. Vece as Supervisory Investigator and Thomas McKean as Supervisory Compliance Officer. Mr. Vece was a compliance officer at CPSC's Chicago Regional Office. Mr. McKean had been a trial attorney for CPSC's Division of Product Defect Correction since 1980.

RECALLS

Consumers wishing to verify any model numbers of any recalls listed below may contact CPSC's toll-free Hotline at the following numbers: In the continental U.S., dial 800/638-8326; in Maryland, 800/492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 800/638-8333. A teletypewriter for the deaf is available on the following numbers: National (including Alaska and Hawaii) 800/638-8270, Maryland residents only 800/492-8104. During non-working hours, messages are recorded and answered on the following working day.

COFFEE MAKERS

Approximately 6,800 electric coffee makers manufactured by Regal Ware, Inc., of Kewaskum, Wisconsin, are being recalled because they may pose a shock hazard to users.

The recall is being conducted voluntarily in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The 10-cup, stainless-steel percolators were insulated with a thermoplastic material around electrical wiring to the signal light. The insulation may deteriorate and might permit bare wiring to conduct electrical current through the metal parts of the coffee pot. No reports of shock have been received by the company or CPSC.

The Regal coffee makers were manufactured from August 1, 1979, through April, 1980, and were sold nationwide for approximately $35 to $45 by Montgomery Wards, Sears Roebuck and Co., and other retail stores under the model number of K7591. The model number is embossed on the bottom of the pot's black plastic base.

JCPenney retail outlets have sold the pots under the "JCPenney" label. These units can be identified by the model number 784-3071 on the bottom of the plastic base.

In addition to the model numbers, all units under recall display on the bottom of the base an eight-digit date code within the range 08017911 through 04308011. Those units in the distribution chain which have been repaired carry a date code which is underlined and displayed at the bottom of the plastic base. In addition, repaired units have the letter "R" stamped on the flap of the package.

Consumers may have their pots repaired free-of-charge by mailing them to the nearest Regal Service Center. Postage costs will be reimbursed. To determine the location of the nearest Regal Service Center, consumers should write to Regal Ware, Inc., c/o Customer Service Department, 1675 Riegle Drive, Kewaskum, Wisconsin, 53040, or consult the list enclosed with each new coffee maker.

Consumers also may contact the store from which the coffee pot was purchased to be advised of the store's individual recall program.

"BRISTLE BLOCKS"

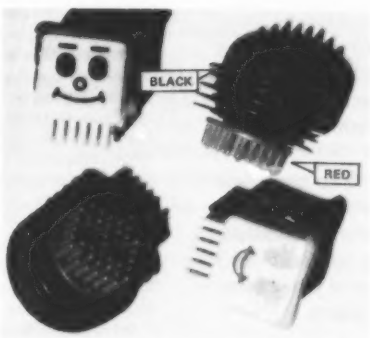
Playskool, Inc., in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced that two "Bristle Block" components which may detach in use and abuse testing fail to comply with a regulation designed to prevent children under 3 from swallowing small parts.

These parts should be discarded and will be replaced without charge to customers. The company is taking this action although no injuries or complaints have been received relating to these components.

Bristle Blocks are colored plastic shapes with flexible bristles that interlock. The products are sold and distributed nationally by leading wholesale and retail establishments.

The two components to be replaced are Bristle heads contained in Bristle Block set #808 and Bristle wheels-and-axle assemblies included in Bristle sets #806, 807 and 808.

Members of the public who have these Bristle heads and wheel-and-axle assemblies are urged to discard their old components and write to the company by postcard or letter requesting a replacement at the following address:



These "Bristle Block" components failed to comply with a regulation on small parts.

PLAYSKOOL, INC.
4500 West Augusta Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois 60651
ATTENTION: Jane Roberts

Replacement will be provided free of charge by the company by return mail.

Consumers with any questions may call Playskool collect and ask for Jane Roberts of the Customer Service Department at (312) 276-6700.

LAWN MOWER WARNING

Owners of more than 18,000 cordless battery-powered lawn mowers are being warned that a possible defect in the mower's battery may pose a fire hazard while the mower sits unused in a garage or storage area.

The warning is being issued jointly by the manufacturer, Black & Decker (U.S.) Inc. of Towson, Maryland, and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The company has received eight separate complaints from consumers reporting that the battery on their lawn mower caught on fire while in storage. Black & Decker currently is conducting tests on their model 8055 cordless battery-powered mowers to determine the exact cause of the fires.

There have been no reports of injuries or deaths related to the fires. In addition, neither CPSC nor the company has received reports of battery fires occurring while the lawn mowers were being used by consumers.

The Black & Decker lawn mowers are orange and white in color and have two blades which produce a 19-inch cut. They were manufactured in 1976 and sold nationwide in hardware stores and other retail outlets between January, 1976 and August, 1980. The model number 8055 is embossed with the words "19-inch Cordless Twin Motor" on the top of the plastic housing next to the battery.

While the company is conducting tests and developing a program to repair the lawn mowers, consumers are being urged to remove the fuses from the battery before placing the mower in storage. Consumers also are being advised to store the mower at a safe distance from flammable materials.

To obtain instructions on how to remove the battery fuses, other safety precautions, and to arrange for future corrections by Black & Decker Service Centers, consumers should call Black & Decker's toll-free number at **800-638-3830.**

WRAP-UP OF CPSC REGIONAL OFFICE NEWS

The **San Francisco** Regional Office staff recently helped provide information at a trade fair sponsored by the People's Republic of China. The fair was the first of three being held in this country by the Chinese under an agreement with the U.S. Department of Commerce. Larry Cornell, of SFRO, helped manage an information booth at the fair. Each day short briefings were held for importers and others who sought additional information about products covered by U.S. regulations. More than 22,000 product items intended for future import were displayed.

The **New York** Regional Office staff participated in a product safety seminar held recently by the West Essex Extension of Essex Community College in New Jersey. The seminar, attended by 50 community leaders, was one of six sessions presented on Consumers and the Law.

CPSC TEAM STUDYING ELECTRIC BLANKET HAZARDS

Electric blankets now used in approximately 61 per cent of American households cause an estimated 2,200 fires each year.

A staff team studying the death and injury data related to these fires has recommended that the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) initiate a project to explore ways to reduce any risk of fire hazards associated with electric blankets.

Based upon 1978 U.S. Fire Administration data, it is estimated that about 15 deaths and 100 consumer injuries related to such fires occur annually. Death certificates collected by the agency since 1974 indicate that most of the victims were between the ages of 66 and 87 years of age.

CPSC has identified three major causes of electric blanket fires. They are heat entrapment, flexural failure (when the product's power cord breaks), and thermostat failure.

CPSC's engineering staff estimates that the majority of electric blanket-related fires are caused by bunching of an area of the blanket not monitored by the thermostats.

A burned electric blanket is examined by Darryl Toms, electronic engineer, at CPSC's Engineering Laboratory.

CHRONIC CHEMICAL HAZARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED

A program for identifying, evaluating, and regulating chemicals that could present chronic hazards for consumers was fully implemented in Fiscal Year 1980 by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

During the first phase, about 600 chemicals entered the *screening* stage for toxicity and presence in consumer products.

The second phase, *hazard assessment,* is the intensive study of the chemicals' health effects, marketing patterns, and exposure to humans. In the third phase, *control options* are developed for chemicals whose health effects and exposure appear to present a significant risk.

Phase four, *regulation*, is reserved for those chemicals which the Commission determines present unreasonable risks of injury. At present, about eight chemicals, chemical groups, or products have reached stages of control and regulation.

A major objective for Fiscal Year 1981 is to complete action on these items, which include asbestos-containing products; benzene; benzidine dyes; carbon monoxide; formaldehyde; n-Hexane; lead-containing products and products containing other heavy metals; and perchloroethylene, trichloroethylene and dichloroethane.

Asbestos. This mineral may cause lung cancer and other lung diseases when consumers inhale its microscopic fibers. It is expected that CPSC will soon issue a general order requiring manufacturers of selected products to report information on the uses of asbestos in the marketplace for the products and public exposure to the products. If warranted, CPSC may issue a second general order for information on additional products during FY81.

Benzene. Scientific data indicates that exposure to benzene is associated with leukemia. CPSC is currently reviewing various regulatory options on its proposal to ban benzene as an intentional ingredient in consumer products and to limit its presence as a contaminant in consumer products to 0.1 percent. At present, benzene does not appear to be in consumer products in substantially greater amounts than this.

Benzidine Dyes. Benzidine has been shown to be carcinogenic. Current scientific information indicates that there is evidence that benzidine-dyes may also be carcinogenic. Dyes containing these chemicals are sold in supermarkets for home use, and are used in arts and crafts. CPSC staff has recommended that the Commission propose a rule to control consumer exposure to consumer dye products. In FY 81, CPSC plans to investigate the use of these dyes in general wearing apparel and other selected consumer products.

Carbon Monoxide. High doses of carbon monoxide can cause death. It is believed that with increased insulation of homes, carbon monoxide and other indoor air pollutants--from stoves, fuel space heaters, fireplaces, and other products--may accumulate in homes. In FY 81, CPSC will study the possible chronic health risks from low-level carbon monoxide poisoning.

Formaldehyde. Widely used in consumer products, formaldehyde can cause a range of health symptoms. Interim findings from an ongoing laboratory study show that some rats exposed to formaldehyde gas have developed nasal carcinomas. A panel of Federal scientists established by CPSC, working with the National Toxicology Program, are examining the human health implications of this study. CPSC has held hearings to gather information on adverse health effects for consumers who have installed urea formaldehyde foam (UFF) insulation in their homes, and has proposed a labeling rule to require manufacturers of UFF insulation to provide consumers with information about potential adverse health effects caused by the release of formaldehyde gas from the product. The agency has begun studying the use of formaldehyde in textile finishes.

n-Hexane. A petroleum distillate used in some paints and adhesives, n-Hexane can injure the human nervous system. CPSC staff may consider a rule for special labeling of selected consumer products containing this chemical.

Toxic Heavy Metals. Cadmium and chromium may be carcinogens. Lead can damage the nervous system and, at high concentrations, cause death. They are used in inks for paints, party and holiday decorations, and in printing inks. In FY 81, CPSC will begin investigating the use of toxic heavy metals in inks and consumers' potential for exposure.

Perchloroethylene, Trichloroethylene, and Dichloroethane. Perchloroethylene may be carcinogenic. CPSC is monitoring consumer exposure to perchloroethylene in coin-operating dry cleaning machines, and, depending on findings, may propose limits. Trichloroethylene and dichloroethane may also be carcinogenic; CPSC staff is considering regulatory options to be presented to the Commission for these two chemicals.

MERIT PAY SYSTEM NOW IN EFFECT AT CPSC

The Consumer Product Safety Commission will implement its new merit pay and performance appraisal for merit pay employees systems during November.

Under these systems, approximately 240-250 CPSC supervisors and management officials grades 13 through 15 will earn pay increases based on their work efforts rather than on length of service. Within-grade increases for these employees are eliminated.

The systems revolve around performance appraisals, which are based on the goals which each supervisor and management official (defined as one who influences agency policy) is to achieve for the coming year.

Unlike previous performance appraisals, the new ones will contain performance plans which list managers' expectations, articulated with the participation of employees. Progress toward achievement of the goals will be reviewed during the year. The end result should be better communication of the aims of the office for the year.

At the end of the appraisal year, June 30, the manager will evaluate the employee based on accomplishments defined by the performance appraisal plan. One of five ratings, from Outstanding to Unsatisfactory, will be assigned to the employee for the year. The results are forwarded to the Directorate for Administration, which will translate the ratings into merit pay points for each individual.

Every merit pay employee is guaranteed at least half of the annual comparability increase. The rest of the comparability increase, as well as what each employee would have earned through within-grade increases, and estimates of quality step increases, go into the pool of funds for merit pay.

There will be three pools of funds for CPSC merit pay employees: one for the field offices, another for offices that report to the Commissioners and Executive Director, and the last for directorates. The computer will calculate how much each merit pay point will earn by dividing the total number of rating points given to employees in the pool into the applicable funds for the pool.

Although this first year the performance appraisal cycle runs from November through June 30, in 1981 it will begin its regular schedule of July 1 though June 30. Evaluations will be completed in time for employees to receive any pay increases effective the first pay period in October.

Beginning in October, 1981, all government employees, except Presidential appointees, will be covered by a performance appraisal process. This means work will be evaluated on a list of performance elements worked out each year by the supervisor and employee. Only supervisors and managers grades 13 through 15 will be included in the merit pay system. Other, non-merit pay, employees will continue to be paid within-grade increases and the total amount of comparability pay.

All these personnel changes were mandated by the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. It also set up the Senior Executive Service for managers at GS-16 through Executive Level IV who can earn performance awards and bonuses based on a fund separate from merit pay.

A Performance Appraisal Review Board will be established within the next few weeks in CPSC to provide continual review of the performance appraisal and merit pay systems.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

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cpsc memo

DECEMBER 1980

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

Commissioner Sam Zagoria holds two of the highly popular "Pot Belly" line of children's stuffed animal toys which are being recalled because of wires in the stuffing. (Story and additional pictures are elsewhere in this issue.)

CPSC PLANS TO BAN THREE FABRIC DYES

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has directed its staff to develop a proposal to ban three potentially carcinogenic types of dyes commonly found in fabric dye products available to consumers.

In a 4-to-1 vote the Commissioners granted a petition requesting it to prepare a ban of benzidine dyes and two chemically similar types of dye components found in an estimated 60 per cent of all home dye products.

These dye products, available both in powder and liquid form, are used by consumers to impart new color to clothing or fabrics. Approximately 30 million packages are sold to consumers in retail stores each year at an average cost of about 80 cents per two-ounce package.

The CPSC action covers three types of dyes—benzidine dyes and two of its "congeners" (dyes from the same chemical family), known as o-tolidine dyes and o-dianisidine dyes.

Scientific evidence suggests that once dye products containing these three types of dyes have entered the human system they are metabolized (or "broken down") into benzidine, o-tolidine and o-dianisidine—chemicals which are potential carci-

continued page 2

CPSC STAFF URGES BAN ON FORMALDEHYDE FOAM

The staff of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has recommended a ban on the manufacture, sale or installation of urea-formaldehyde foamed-in-place insulation (UFFI) because of the risk of adverse health effects from the inhalation of formaldehyde vapors from insulation in the home. Commissioners are expected to decide whether to propose a ban at a December 18 meeting.

Among the factors influencing the staff's recommendation to ban UFFI was a November, 1980 report by a 16-member Federal Formaldehyde Panel which concluded that formaldehyde should be presumed to pose a risk of cancer to humans.

Formaldehyde gas may cause eye, nose and throat irritation, coughing, shortness of breath, skin irritation, nausea, headaches and dizziness. People with respiratory problems or allergies may suffer more serious reactions, especially persons allergic to formaldehyde. Symptoms may appear immediately or not until months after installation of the insulation in the home.

The agency said it had received over 1,550 complaints

continued page 2

HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTS SAFER THAN BEFORE

If you're buying Christmas tree lights this holiday season, the majority of the new miniature lights are going to be safer than some of the sets you may have used in past years.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the increased margin of safety comes mainly from improved standards for miniature Christmas tree and decorative lights which have been voluntarily adopted by a growing number of American and foreign manufacturers of tree lights. Firms in the U.S., Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong and Italy are among those producing lights that meet the standard.

The upgraded performance specifications for these tree lights came as a direct result of ongoing efforts by CPSC to eliminate the electrical shock and fire hazards associated with the product. As early as 1974 and 1975, CPSC was inspecting lights in retail outlets, warehouses and pier distribution centers in search of especially hazardous Christmas tree lights.

The Commission has proposed a mandatory standard for miniature Christmas tree lights. However, in order to

continued page 2

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HOLIDAY LIGHTS *from page 1*

allow the Commission to monitor improvements in existing standards, the Commission has deferred issuing a final standard.

Under instructions from Commissioners, the agency is continuing its inspection program to determine whether newly-produced tree lights meet the voluntary standards, or if the lights continue to present hazards to consumers. CPSC is having miniature tree lights tested to determine conformance with voluntary standards and to determine if any shock-fire hazards still exist. The results of these inspections as well as staff recommendations will be contained in a report due for presentation to Commissioners in early 1981. A decision on whether mandatory standards are needed for the product is expected in the spring.

Meanwhile, some local and state governments have already mandated the use of safety standards for Christmas tree lights. The State of Maryland and the City of Los Angeles are among those requiring a certified testing laboratory [Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Electrical Testing Laboratories, etc.] to document the safety of electrical appliances, including miniature Christmas tree lights.■

HOLIDAY TIPS FOR TREE LIGHT SAFETY

If you customarily decorate a tree indoors for the Christmas season, here are some safety tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to minimize the hazards in your home:

- As you unpack stored tree lights, take the time to check each set. First, inspect the bulbs to make sure they operate. After checking the bulbs, remove the plug from the socket and make a visual inspection of the wires. Check from one end of the string of lights to the other. Look for cracked insulation or bare wire, especially where the wire enters a lamp socket. Look for cracked sockets, too. Cracked insulation, bare wires or cracked sockets are reasons for discarding the set.
- Check the plug to make sure the connections are good. One way to tell without getting a shock is to plug the set into the add-on connector of a second set of lights and plug that set into the connector of the first set. Check to make sure the plugs of both sets fit well with no exposed, live parts.
- All strings of lights are not the same. Lights may be wired in series or parallel circuits. If a bulb goes out, the circuit is opened on some sets and the other lights go off. In other sets, the remaining lights continue to burn. If you have the latter and they are miniature Christmas tree lights, try to replace the burned-out lamp with a bulb of the proper voltage size; even though the other lamps continue to work, they will be subjected to increased electrical power, shortened life, and they could eventually become a fire hazard in the home.
- Indoor lights should not be used outdoors. Use extension cords that are capable of transmitting the current (amps) to the lights without overloading the cord, triggering circuit-breakers, or blowing protective fuses.

If you are buying new miniature Christmas tree lights, look for some certification on the package that the set meets the performance specifications of an independent testing laboratory. All sets in this classification will have passed a series of performance tests which are designed to eliminate hazardous tree lights. ■

FABRIC DYES *from page 1*

nogens. Benzidine, in fact, presently is regulated as a carcinogen in the workplace by OSHA. Human epidemiological studies conducted outside the United States suggest a direct link between occupational exposure to benzidine dyes and bladder cancer.

CPSC staff believes that the dyes may enter the human system either by inhalation of the dye powders; by skin absorption, such as when hands are dipped into a dye liquid; or by accidental ingestion of the dye.

CPSC staff is informed that benzidine dyes currently are not used as components of consumer dye products; however, products containing benzidine dyes still may be available on retail store shelves and in consumers' homes.

The Commission acted in response to a petition filed by various artist groups including the Center for Occupational Hazards (based in New York City). The petition had urged CPSC to ban all consumer products used to impart color which contain benzidine dyes, o-tolidine dyes or o-dianisidine dyes; the Commission granted the petition in part by directing the staff to limit its development of a proposed ban only to consumer fabric dye products, including dyes used by amateur artists. The petition also had requested a ban of other consumer products which impart color (such as shoe polish, fingerpaints and crayons), but CPSC staff does not now believe that these products contain these three types of dyes.

Preliminary indications are that these three types of dyes have been used predominantly in the darker shades of consumer dye products, such as the browns, blues and blacks.

Before the Commission decides whether to issue a proposed ban on consumer fabric dye products containing these three dyes, CPSC staff will be gathering additional data on the health effects of these dyes and further marketing information on dye products containing these ingredients. CPSC staff also will carefully consider the probable economic impacts of any proposed ban, and will solicit comments from the public on any proposal.

All consumer fabric dye products currently available in the marketplace are within the scope of CPSC's investigation of these potentially carcinogenic ingredients. CPSC staff plans to gather information so that consumers will be able to identify which dye products actually contain one of the three types of dye ingredients. (o-Dianisidine dye components manufactured through the "copperization" process are not included currently in efforts to develop a proposed ban.)

In addition, CPSC is conducting scientific testing to determine whether fabrics which have been home-dyed pose any health risk for consumers. CPSC staff also plans to investigate potential dye release from commercially dyed clothing.

Consumers wishing further details on fabric dye products should call CPSC's toll-free Hotline at 800-638-8326; in Maryland, call 800-492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands call 800-638-8333. ■

FORMALDEHYDE FOAM *from page 1*

of adverse health effects from occupants of homes following installation of UFFI. Of these, some 350 complaints were subsequently investigated by Commission personnel to obtain additional information on the illnesses allegedly caused by the formaldehyde vapors.

In its 201-page briefing package to Commissioners, the staff estimated that some 475,000 homes will have been insulated with UFFI by the end of the year. They also estimated that the increased risk of cancer to an individual living in a home insulated with UFFI is approximately one in ten thousand.

CPSC also noted that a number of states have already acted to limit formaldehyde hazards. Massachusetts banned UFFI in 1979, and Connecticut now requires that a warning of the possible health hazards of UFFI be cited in all urea-formaldehyde insulation contracts submitted to homeowners. Other states have legislation pending, some of which would impose moratoriums on the sale of UFFI for home use.■

CHAIRMAN DISCUSSES 'BUSINESS AND THE CONSUMER'

Susan B. King, Chairman CPSC

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In areas where consumers can decide for themselves and protect themselves, the era of government paternalism is on the wane. But when the consumer is an innocent and unknowing victim of a hidden hazard, it appears likely that government regulators will be tougher than ever before.

Although I have been asked to write about the relationship of business and consumers, there is an important third party that must also be considered: the government. Perhaps the most significant change in the American business landscape over the past ten or fifteen years has been the growth in the number of regulatory agencies, especially those specifically concerned with health and safety issues. Our agency—the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)—and others like the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration all appeared on the scene in the late sixties and seventies.

The Climate Has Changed

Regulatory agencies flourished in the climate of those times. For most Americans, there was abundance, and with abundance came the opportunity to look beyond questions of "quantity" and to examine the "quality" of our lives. The sixties and seventies were times of hope and confidence, and the creation of the new regulatory agencies expressed our faith that the demands of consumers—backed up by the insistence of government and coupled with the ingenuity of industry—could result in a safer, healthier environment, and a more responsive marketplace.

The climate has changed since the early sixties. It was perhaps inevitable that we would have to learn what others in the world had already accepted: that our resources are *not* infinite, that there are limits to everything, and that these limits often require hard choices we would rather avoid.

Times became harder economically. Watergate proved to be only the biggest of a succession of events and misdeeds that created self-doubt and cynicism. All segments of the public—consumers, business, and eventually even government—began to question more and more loudly whether government regulation per se could provide answers to social problems. Some even asked whether regulation was of any benefit at all to the consumer, or whether it merely compounded our economic woes.

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The role and utility of government regulation is a crucially important question, but one which, regrettably, has not been debated as dispassionately or seriously as it should be. Rather, too often we have allowed ourselves the luxury of rhetorical posturing. Critics of government regulation characterize it as a ridiculous quest for risk-free society; defenders of regulation fall back on horror stories of maimed babies. For too long there was inadequate discussion of what should be the proper role of government and how to address problems that did exist.

Reasonable Regulation

The eighties, I think, will be a time of rethinking the issues. I hope that the three parties most involved in government regulation of the marketplace—business, consumers, and government—will find ways to make government regulations more sensible and more effective. For some time, we at CPSC have been exploring what I call "reasonable regulation." Reasonable regulation means a pragmatic attitude: determine whether there is a problem, define it carefully, and then see what will work. Despite the fact that CPSC has issued some quite successful safety standards and product bans, we recognize that "what will work" can include many activities other than rule making.

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For example, we have the legal authority to ensure that hazardous products are removed from retail shelves and even recalled from the hands of consumers. We are placing increased emphasis on this alternative to industry-wide product standards or bans. The number of products affected by such recall actions is impressive, more than 53 million products in 1979 alone. Equally important is the fact that nearly every recall effort is *negotiated* with the industry rather than the result of a mandatory rule or of litigation. Negotiated corrective actions provide maximum consumer protection at minimum cost: by promptly removing potentially hazardous products from the marketplace; by sparing government and industry the costs of protracted litigation; and by focusing squarely on only those specific products that present a hazard.

The Commission also has learned that, in some instances, voluntary standards, initiated and even administered by the industry itself, can provide consumers with the same level of safety as a mandatory standard, and often at a lower cost. We have had disappointments with this approach when the industry-proposed solution is not adequate to meet the consumers' need, but many of our efforts in this area of voluntary standards have been promising enough to ensure our continued interest.

Sometimes we choose to encourage safer consumer use rather than regulate the product. For example, years ago skateboards were the fastest rising source of serious children's accidents.

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The Commission recognized that reducing injuries meant either banning the product entirely or educating the public about skateboard dangers and safe use; we chose the latter approach. I call this "respect for the consumer," and I believe that this attitude will go a long way toward improving regulatory effectiveness. We are relying more on the intelligence of consumers and their ability to make sensible decisions if they have adequate information.

Tougher Than Before

I want, however, to emphasize an important distinction: where consumers can decide for themselves and protect themselves, the era of government paternalism is on the wane. But when the consumer is an innocent and unknowing victim of a hidden hazard, I predict that the government, including the CPSC, will be tougher than ever before. This distinction is particularly important in the area of chronic hazards: substances that present long-term risks of injury or illness, including cancer. The regulatory agencies—and more importantly, the public we serve—no longer will tolerate exposure to dozens of possibly harmful substances in the air or water, the workplace, or in the products we use every day.

Government today is all too aware that one in every four Americans can expect to get cancer, and one in five will die of it. The costs of cancer are incalculable — medical treatment, lost earnings, and the pain and suffering of cancer victims, their families, and friends. Some—perhaps most—of this cancer has environmental causes. Some—we do not know how much—may someday be traced to exposure to a number of the more than 48,000 chemicals now in use in the United States. The government scientists could be wrong about this of course. But if they are *right*, and if cancer rates continue to rise in any way comparable to the exponential growth of chemical use over the last 25 years, we will face a public health problem of staggering magnitude.

There is no sure cure for cancer. The Consumer Product Safety Commission and the other health and safety regulatory agencies must operate on the premise that cancer prevention offers our best—perhaps our only—hope. We believe that a substantial number of cancer cases can be prevented by limiting or prohibiting public exposure to cancer-causing substances. In this case, surely, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

The picture for the eighties is cloudy, and prediction is a risky business. It seems likely, however, that economic constraints will remain with us. My hope is that, as we learn to live with less abundance, we do not assume that business has less responsibility to the consumer, or that the consumer has less of a right to safety.■

RECALL TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS CHANGES

The CPSC Recall Effectiveness Task Force recommended, in its recent report, that the Commission set up a system to prioritize recalls by their degree of hazard, with appropriate actions to follow each type of priority category. The task force had been created by Chairman King in October 1979, to address the low rate of return by consumers of recalled hazardous products.

More than 2,500 recalls, involving tens of millions of potentially hazardous product units, have been overseen by CPSC since 1973. After studying these recalls, the task force made the following general observations:

- Widespread public notice of recalls does not necessarily produce a large consumer response.
- Targeted notices to individuals or a particular audience often yield greater results, yet individual notice is usually impossible because owners of most consumer products are unrecorded.
- Paid advertisements of recalls may be necessary at times, if the media does not publicize recall press releases sufficiently.
- **The rate of return of products from the distribution chain is much greater than the rate of return from consumers. Some products are not returned by consumers to the retailer or manufacturer because the products are either repaired at home or disposed of, or the products are used with increased care after the hazard notice.**

Based on these observations and the additional study of recalls, the task force recommended several changes in procedures, which the Commission is now reviewing. Among the recommendations for CPSC are:

1) Litigate cases in certain well-chosen instances.
2) Initiate an on-going evaluation to work towards a "science of recall effectiveness."
3) **Initiate a priority system to classify potential hazards according to their severity and the likelihood of injury, and to follow such assessments with uniform, appropriate action.**
4) The amount and kind of general public notice undertaken should be associated with the hazard priority assigned to it.
5) **Separate records should be kept for products corrected in consumers' hands and those corrected in the chain of distribution.**
6) In top priority cases, Commission field personnel should have greater responsibility for promoting the hazard message locally.
7) CPSC should estimate the number of recalled units in consumers' hands at the beginning of a corrective action, by means of CPSFORE or otherwise. CPSFORE is a product forecasting computer model developed by CPSC.

To further gather information and discuss the future of recalls, the Commission held a day-long recall conference in Washington on November 13, 1980.■

TIPS FOR A SAFE HOLIDAY!

- **Keep matches, lighters, candles out of the reach of children.**
- **Avoid smoking near flammable decorations.**
- **Make an emergency escape plan to use, if a fire breaks out anywhere in the house. See that each member of the family knows what to do.**
- **Avoid wearing loose, flowing clothes - especially long, open sleeves - near the open flames of a fireplace, stove, or a candlelit table.**
- **Never burn candles near evergreens on a mantlepiece or table. Burning evergreens in the fireplace can be hazardous. When dry, greens burn like tinder. Their flames can flare out of control, sending sparks flying about a room.**
- **Plan for safety. Look for, and eliminate, potential danger spots near candles, fireplaces, trees and/or electrical connections.■**

CPSC TV 'SPOTS' WIN 2 TOP AWARDS

The Consumer Product Safety Commission's public service announcements on safety in energy conservation, currently being shown on television, have won two prizes - the First Prize and a special Grand Prize - in the 1980 International Film and Television Festival of New York.

The agency's three filmed "spots," one running 30 seconds and two 60 seconds in length, were done for the Commission's "Save Energy Safely" campaign.

The PSAs won first place in the public service category and, in addition, won a Grand Award as the best campaign among some 1,400 entries submitted this year. The entries included commercials produced by business and industry.■

REGIONAL OFFICE NEWS...

The **New York** Regional Office (NYRO) investigated the recent death of a year-old boy. The child was accidentally strangled by a cord which had been threaded through the ventilation holes on a pacifier. A CPSC regulation requires all pacifier packages to be labeled with the statement: *"Warning - Do Not Tie Pacifier Around Child's Neck as it Presents a Strangulation Danger."* ■

PRE-PARENT SAFETY WORKSHOPS PLANNED

Babies, infants and young children are only as safe as the toys, baby products and other equipment found in the home.

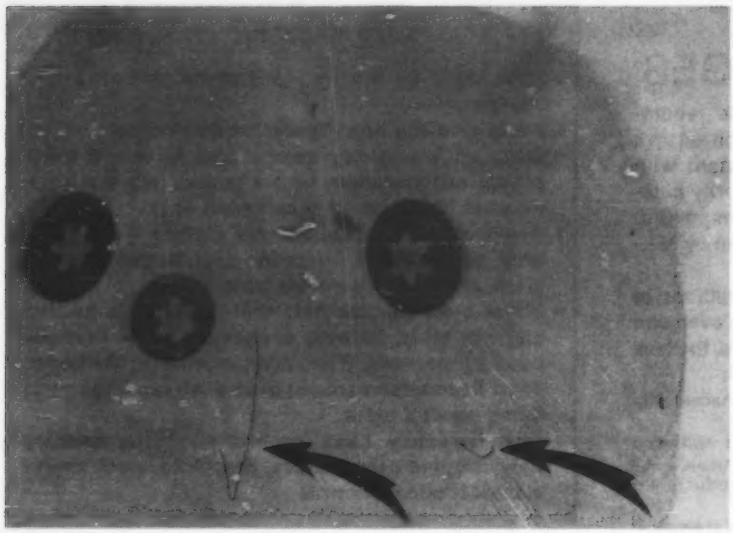
That's the theme of a nationwide U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission program set for the spring, 1981, which will educate parents and expectant parents on the role of safety in the selection, use and maintenance of toys and other children's products.

In addition, the campaign will emphasize the need for safety consciousness in supervising children under the age of five; accident situations that often develop in the home; and how parents and others can avert accidents most commonly associated with the products.

According to the agency, products involved in the greatest number of children's accidents are high chairs, cribs, baby walkers, strollers, baby carriers, toy boxes, playpens, pacifiers and rattles.

CPSC expects hospitals, day care centers, schools, head start programs, and state and municipal governments to take part in the infant-child safety campaign. A similar effort was launched this fall among six Washington, D.C., hospitals where expectant parent education programs were already underway.

Expectant parents participate in eight one-hour classroom sessions devoted to infant care, product safety and hazards of the home environment. Participating hospitals are D.C. General Hospital, Washington Hospital Center, Providence Hospital, Georgetown University Hospital, Howard University Hospital, and Columbia Hospital For Women.■



In the photo at right, Engineering Technician Manuel Karos at CPSC's Engineering Laboratory prepares to X-ray a "Pot Belly" stuffed animal toy for hazardous material in the stuffing. The X-ray of the animal's head at the left shows a wire approximately one inch long in the animal's nose. The circular discs represent the eyes and nose. Another small foreign object may be seen at lower right. Except for the arrows to point out the objects, the photo has not been altered.

POPULAR 'POT BELLY' STUFFED ANIMALS RECALLED

The highly popular "Pot Belly" line of children's stuffed animals is being recalled by the importer in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission because the toys may present hazards which could injure young children.

More than five million of the five different types of "Pot Bellies" have sold nationwide in a variety of sizes since late in 1978. Pot Bellies are distributed to more than 2,800 toy stores, department stores and other retailers by the Daekor division of Hudson Brands, Ltd., of New York City.

CPSC has received a number of consumer complaints of small wires protruding from the toy animals; however, there have been no reports of serious injuries to date. Testing by CPSC revealed that a substantial percentage of the toys tested contained sharp wires in the stuffing.

When tested under the terms of a CPSC regulation designed to prevent children under the age of three years from swallowing and choking on small parts of toys, some of the Pot Bellies failed the test. Accordingly, these stuffed toys — until inspected by the importer to ensure their safety — have been determined to be "banned hazardous substances" under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act.

CPSC also discovered through testing that the "bean bag" variety of smaller Pot Bellies presents another hazard in addition to the potential presence of small wires. The bottoms of bean bag Pot Bellies are stuffed with crushed walnut shells which could be swallowed by children if the toy animals come apart at the seams (as some did during the CPSC testing).

Consumers are being urged to return their Pot Belly stuffed animals to the retailer where the toy was purchased for a full refund or replacement. Pot Bellies have been sold at retail prices ranging from $8 to $30, depending on their size. Refunds only are being offered to consumers who return bean bag Pot Bellies to the retailer.

(The importer also has distributed about 5,000 large Pot Belly koala bears and brown bears which are not being subjected to the ban or the recall. These 40-inch-long bears were manufactured by a Brooklyn, N.Y., company which used a stuffing material without wire.)

Hudson Brands will alert each retailer to the hazards and the procedures to be followed in carrying out the recall and inspection program, and also will inspect all further shipments of these toy animals to ensure that there are no wires in the stuffing. ■

"SQUEEZE ME BEAR" TOYS ARE CALLED BACK

A children's stuffed animal sold nationwide as the "Squeeze Me Bear" is being recalled by the importer in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission because the toy may present safety hazards which could injure young children.

An estimated 53,000 Squeeze Me Bears have been sold since 1979 at retail prices averaging from $7 to $8 each. The toy bears were manufactured in Taiwan and distributed to various toy stores and other retail outlets by the Atlanta Novelty Co. of Long Island City, New York. The potentially hazardous toys bear the product code number of either 291 or 298.

Testing by CPSC of a random sample of the bears showed that one of the bears contained a potentially hazardous sharp wire in the stuffing, leading CPSC staff to believe that a significant portion of the other Squeeze Me Bears in stores and consumers homes also may contain such wires; a similar recall of another importer's brand of stuffed animals was initiated less than a month ago.

The potential danger lies in the possibility that the wire may work its way through the bear's fur. So far there have been no injuries reported to CPSC.

In addition, during CPSC testing which simulated normal use and abuse of the toy by a young child, some noses of the bears fell off, thus posing a potential choking hazard to young children. Accordingly, these stuffed toys have been determined to be "banned hazardous substances" under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act.

Consumers are being urged to return their Squeeze Me Bears to the retailer where the toy was purchased for a full refund.

The distributor will alert each of its customers to the hazards and the procedures to be followed in carrying out the recall. The distributor has ceased making further shipments of this stuffed toy.

Consumers who have further questions about this recall program may call CPSC's toll-free Hotline at 800-638-8326; in Maryland, call 800-492-8363; and in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, call 800-638-8333.■

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BUSINESS BUREAU ARBITRATES CONSUMER COMPLAINTS

A new method of settling disputes between car owners and manufacturers is becoming increasingly popular.

To eliminate some of the expense and trouble of resolving consumer complaints, the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB) instituted eight years ago a program of binding arbitration to settle disputes between consumers and business. The program has become popular with auto manufacturers and owners in a number of major cities in the United States. CBBB is working to include other products and services in the program.

Third Party Dispute Resolution, as the CBBB calls it, involves bringing the consumer and the businessman, if both agree, together before an unpaid community volunteer who acts as arbitrator between the parties. The two parties agree beforehand to accept the judgment of the arbitrator.

The Better Business Bureaus in local communities act as administrators of the program and train the volunteer arbitrators. Volunteers include academic personnel, businessmen, professionals, reporters, housewives, and others. In some cases, the business participants in the disputes pay the administrative costs of the arbitration.

In 13 major cities, Better Business Bureaus have agreements with many General Motors dealers that they will submit to arbitration if problems cannot be resolved between them and consumers. In several cities, the Better Business Bureaus have similar agreements with Volkswagen of America and its dealers. The CBBB also is running a test program called Autoline in Des Moines, Milwaukee, and Denver, in which 10 car manufacturers have agreed to accept arbitration of disputes and to fund the administrative costs. In all these programs, the consumer has the right to refuse arbitration.

The CBBB envisions this as an increasingly useful method of resolving disputes, and is interested in attracting more businesses into the program. To discuss various methods of resolving disputes through third parties, the CBBB is holding a Forum in Washington on December 11, 1980, for business, government, directors of consumer affairs, and others interested in improving complaint handling.■

WANT SOME MORE HOLIDAY & TOY SAFETY INFORMATION?

The Consumer Product Safety Commission's holiday and toy safety publications include the following:

A Toy & Sports Equipment Safety Guide - a booklet containing safety information on toys, including electrically operated toys, and children's products; bicycles; tricycles; mini-bikes and mini-cycles; roller skates and ice skates; skateboards; and sleds, toboggans, and snow disks.

Merry Christmas with Safety, a pamphlet giving general rules for Christmas safety, focusing on trees, "snow," lights, candles, trimmings, fires and paper.

THINK TOY SAFETY...By knowing the eight toy dangers, a pamphlet.

FOR KIDS' SAKE... THINK TOY SAFETY, a coloring book for young children, with illustrations emphasizing safety principles they can understand.

And for teachers:

Holiday Safety Teachers Guide, No. 7-T, for use by teachers in presenting holiday safety principles to students in grades 4 through 6.■

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